Consciousness of Consciousness: Reflexive Awareness in the Trika Śaivism of Abhinavagupta

Kerry Martin Skora
Chicago, Illinois

B.A., University of Chicago, 1982
M.A., University of California, Santa Barbara, 1989

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Department of Religious Studies

University of Virginia
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Anne E. Monius

David Germano

Robert A. Hueckstedt

Karen C. Lang

Abstract

Kerry Martin Skora

My dissertation is a study of the concept of "reflexive awareness" (denoted by the term *vimarśa*) in the Trika Śaivism of Abhinavagupta (fl. c. 975-1025 c.e.). I retrieve the meanings of this term by interpreting it in relation to Tantra, as most fully articulated by Abhinavagupta in his *Reality-Text-Light* (*Tantrāloka*) (hereafter *TĀ*), an encyclopedic synthesis of Trika Śaivite discourse and practice.

I show that although Abhinavagupta abstractly understood reflexive awareness to be the "consciousness of consciousness," he also used the term to refer to the embodied experience of the recollection of one's identity to the god Śiva erotically intertwining with the goddess Śakti. I show that reflexive awareness is most fully understood with reference to this experience that was achieved precisely in the Tantric ritual of sexual union.

In my introduction, I briefly contextualize Abhinavagupta and his thought; I analyze the term *vimarśa*, explaining its etymology and delineating the connotations of the term as found in works by Abhinavagupta and others; finally, I review previous scholarship on this term.

In the body of my dissertation, I focus on the role and function of reflexive awareness in a Tantric context, by discussing its significance in relation to the following eight topics, each of which corresponds to a section in the *TĀ*: (1) the gradual rising of (levels of) reflexive awareness

(*parāmarśodayakramaḥ*) (*TĀ* 3.65a-200a); (2) the non-separation of reflexive awareness from mantra, etc. (*mantrādyabhinnarūpatvam*) (*TĀ* 3.200b-293); (3) the purification of differentiated thinking (*vikalpasaṃskriyā*) (*TĀ* 4.2a-12b); (4) artificial worship as nonessential (*kalpitārcādyanādaraḥ*) (*TĀ* 4.109b-122a); (5) the vitality of mantra (*mantravīryam*) (*TĀ* 4.181b-193b); (6) the ritual concerning the messenger (*dautavidhiḥ*) (*TĀ* 29.96a-166a); (7) the procedure of the secret teaching (*rahasyopaniṣatkramaḥ*) (*TĀ* 29.166b-186a); and (8) the fusion of all scriptures (*samastaśāstramelana*) (*TĀ* 35).

I conclude by describing certain characteristics of consciousness, language, and reality that have led some scholars to refer to these as "erotic." I show how these same characteristics are applicable to Abhinavagupta's vision of consciousness, language, and reality, as expressed in his notion of reflexive awareness and as understood with reference to the Tantric performance of sexual union.

Chapter I
Introduction

Introductory Remarks: Reflexive Awareness as Embodied Experience

One thousand years ago in the Kashmiri land of mountains, valleys, streams, and caves, the creative visionary Abhinavagupta flourished (c. 975-1025 c.e.; hereafter AG). In this study, I will retrieve the meanings of a special and unusual term that served as the pivot of AG's theology, cosmology, and soteriology, a term he calls "reflexive awareness" (*vimarśa*). This is a term that he applied to ultimate reality, abstractly conceived by AG to be pure Consciousness. It is also a term that he used more concretely, as AG discovered-imagined ultimate reality to be the god Śiva in perpetual sexual union with the goddess Śakti. In such an image, the goddess Śakti became identified with this very aspect of consciousness known as "reflexive awareness." In his theology, AG was able to illuminate pure consciousness while simultaneously evoking its divine embodiment.

For AG, Consciousness is conscious of Consciousness, exhibiting a remarkable capacity termed "reflexive awareness." Expressed in this fashion, the term appears at first to be a very abstract notion, seemingly referring to what is separate from concrete, embodied existence. However,

AG's vision was more sensual. In this thesis I will recover those sensual meanings floating just below the surface.

A most suggestive hint of the richness of the term *vimarśa* is provided by its literal meaning, "touching back," in the sense of touching oneself. For AG, it may also mean "touching forth," in the sense of touching someone else, and thus "touching back and forth" in the sense of two bodies touching each other, back and forth. All of these various connotations refer to embodied experience. In this thesis, I will show that *vimarśa* can in fact only be understood with reference to such embodied experience, and in particular, to the embodied experience of sexual union. Significantly, AG also applied the term "reflexive awareness" to individual consciousness. More precisely, AG used the term "reflexive awareness" to refer to the experience of becoming liberated. In abstract terminology, this is the realization that one is nothing but pure Consciousness. This recollection of Being however takes place precisely in the body as it is the recollection that one is identical to Śiva in union with Śakti, a "wonderful" and "blissful" experience, according to AG, achieved in the performance of sexual union.

The *Reality-Text-Light*: Its Place, Purpose, and Meaning

In order to prove that "reflexive awareness" may only be fully understood in reference to such embodied experience, I will rely on a text called the *Reality-Text-Light* (*Tantrāloka*) (referred to as *TĀ* throughout most of this thesis). In this section, I will place that text within the context of AG's corpus and then describe its purpose as well as the various levels of meaning evoked in its title.

The *Reality-Text-Light* is different from the works of AG that focus exclusively on either philosophy or aesthetics. AG focused on a particular philosophy known as "Recognition" philosophy in his works *Self-Recognition of God: Short Commentary* (*Īśvara-pratyabhijñā-vimarśinī* (*ĪPV*)); and *Self-Recognition of God: Long Commentary* (*Īśvara-pratyabhijñā-vivṛti-vimarśinī* (*ĪPVV*)). He focused on aesthetics in his works (*The Commentary of*) *Abhinavagupta on* (*the Treatise on Dancing of*) *Bharata* (*Abhinavabhāratī* (*ABh*)), and *The Eye* (*to See*) *the Light that Evokes* (*Dhvanyālokalocana* (*DhĀL*)).[1]

Other than pure philosophy and aesthetics, for AG there was a third way of looking at reality, his "tantra-vision." (I explain the notion of tantra below.) This study is primarily interested in that vision of tantra,

illuminated by AG in *Reality-Text-Light* (*Tantrāloka* (*TĀ*)); *Reality-Text-Essence* (*Tantrāsāra* (*TS*)); *The Long Commentary on the Ultimate Triadic Queen* (*Parātriṃśikā-vivaraṇa* (*PTV*)); *The Short Commentary on the Ultimate Triadic Queen* (*Parātrīśikā-laghuvṛtti* (*PTLV*)); and *Commentary on the Victory of the Garlanded Goddess* (*Mālinī-vijaya-vārtika* (*MVV*)). This vision was illuminated most fully in his *Reality-Text-Light*, and it is this text that I will employ as my primary textual basis.[2]

In particular, I will show how AG utilized *vimarśa* and related terms in the *TĀ*. These related terms include *parāmarśa*, *pratyavamarśa*, and *āmarśa*; following Harvey Alper, I will refer to all of these terms as the "mṛś terms." I am also following Alper in limiting myself to one text. Harvey

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[1] On the title of this last text, see Daniel H.H. Ingalls, Jeffrey Moussaieff Masson, and M. V. Patwardhan, trans., *The* Dhvanyāloka *of Ānandavardhana with the* Locana *of Abhinavagupta* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1990), p. 33.

[2] I have been continually inspired and influenced by Raniero Gnoli's magnificent Italian translation of this text, *Luce delle Sacre Scritture (Tantrāloka)*, Classici delle Religioni, sezione prima, Le religioni orientali (Turin: Unione Tipografico-Editrice Torinese, 1972). My method was to refer to Gnoli's text before translating the Sanskrit myself; thus, although the translations of material from TĀ 3, 4, 29, and 35 are my own and based on my own final interpretations of the Sanskrit, Gnoli's translations and interpretations continually influenced my own; for that I am deeply grateful. I have also made considerable use of other translations and interpretations (and, again, the translations are my own, unless otherwise indicated); these are found in works by the following scholars: Raffaele Torella, Kanti Chandra Pandey, Lilian Silburn, André Padoux, Paul Eduardo Muller-Ortega, Mark S. G. Dyczkowski, Alexis Sanderson, Gavin Flood. I am also grateful to these great scholars for their trailblazing work. I will be referring to their works in detail throughout this dissertation; full references are given below.

Alper conducted one of the first extensive studies of the *mṛś* terms, limiting himself to one chapter of Utpaladeva's *IPK*.

He realized however that "the most apt translation of *vimarśa* should be based on a careful mapping of its entire semantic range, author by author, and text by text."[3] I agree and I will take a step towards filling out the range by focusing on its use in the *TĀ*. I will further limit myself to four chapters of the *TĀ*: chapters 3, 4, 29, and 35. I have chosen these chapters because of the great frequency in which AG uses *mṛś* terms.

The *Reality-Text-Light* is AG's encyclopedic, detailed exposition of all tantric Śaiva metaphysical discourses and yogic and ritual practices as they existed in his time; at the same time it is an attempt to appropriate the Krama Kālī cult and all other heterodox traditions. To effect this, he reinterprets and uses as his authoritative umbrella another text, *entitled Victory of the Garlanded Goddess Tantra* (hereafter *MVT*).[4]

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[3] Harvey P. Alper, "*Svabhāvam avabhāsasya vimarśam*: Judgement as a Transcendental Category in Utpaladeva's Śaiva Theology," *Adyar Library Bulletin* 51 (1987): 176-241.

[4] Alexis Sanderson, "Abhinavagupta," in *Encyclopedia of Religion*, vol. 1, p. 8; and Teun Goudriaan, "Hindu Tantric and Śākta Literature," in *Hindu Tantric and Śākta Literature* (History of Indian Literature, edited by Jan Gonda, vol. 2, fasc. 2), by Teun Goudriaan and Sanjukta Gupta (Wiesbaden: Otto Harrassowitz, 1981), p. 163.

In the 37th chapter of his work, Abhinavagupta states the purpose of the *Reality-Text-Light*:[5]

> [to reveal] the truth of the tantras, according to logic and tradition; guided by the light that emanates from (the *Reality-Text-Light*) ... the devoted will be able to easily orient themselves in the rituals [that lead to liberation].

The term *tantra,* Gnoli further notes, refers to various types of texts, mostly ritualistic, either extra-orthodox or anti-orthodox, written by unknown authors beginning from approximately the first centuries c.e.[6] These arose from various schools of thought, not only Śaivite, but also Vaiṣṇavite and Buddhist. They were similar in claiming that they were written in an age of decay to help provide a more direct way towards acquiring superhuman powers and liberation. The tantras that AG elucidated were those that, according to AG, emanated from Śiva Himself and promised liberation. These revelations contained the very stuff of Śiva, emitted by Śiva. Thus, it is not enough to say that they were revealed by Śiva. For AG, they were the very self-revelations of Śiva himself; they were Śiva.

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[5] *TĀ* 37.83: noted and translated by Raniero Gnoli, *Luce delle Sacre Scritture (Tantrāloka),* Classici delle Religioni, sezione prima, Le religioni orientali (Turin: Unione Tipografico-Editrice Torinese, 1972), p. 12. What follows here is my translation of Gnoli's Italian translation.

[6] In most of this paragraph, I am following Gnoli, *LDSS*, pp. 12-13.

This leads us to ask what precisely the term *tantrāloka* meant for AG. The literal meaning of the term *tantra* is "extension" or "warp on a loom."[7] The term may be applied to reality itself, a reality that is extensive or whose essence extends itself, continually repeating itself on different levels. (One might think here of a great Mandelbrot set.) Significantly, the term may also refer to a text, in every sense of that notion, that is, "text" not only as a body of words, but as something that is woven or con-structed and containing a deep structure. Further, the various meanings of tantra, floating around two loci, "reality," and "text" come together in AG's vision of tantra. For Abhinavagupta, Reality is made up of layers upon layers of consciousness. In other words, Reality is deep, it is text-ured; Reality is one great text-ile consisting of the warp and woof of consciousness; or quite simply Reality is a Text. This is reflected in the fact that the Godhead itself is called by AG "Mass of Sounds;" the Godhead continually emits these sounds that condense gradually to give rise to the universe of objects and the universe of meaning. For Abhinavagupta, the universe is meaningful to us precisely because it emanates from God; life is meaningful when everything comes together for us, when through receiving sounds from

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[7] See Teun Goudriaan, "Introduction, History and Philosophy," in *Hindu Tantrism*, by

others we are pointed in the right direction, when we remember where everything came from. Thus when the *MVT* referred to itself as a "tantra" it meant that it was transmitting the primordial revelation emanating from Śiva in no less than 35 million ślokas.[8] The term *tantra* also refers to the tradition of which AG was a part. Thus, some of the connotations of tantra that AG has in mind are: "extension," "emission," "transmission," "text," and "reality." For AG, therefore, tantra refers to a text that embodied, emitted, and transmitted an extensive reality. Any borderline between reality and text was obliterated for AG. Thus, I have translated the term *tantra* as *Reality-Text* and the term *tantrāloka* as the *Reality-Text-Light.* I assume that this latter term carries all the following meanings: "Light-that-belongs-to-the-Reality-Text," "Light-that-shines-on-the-Reality-Text," "Light-that-is-the-Reality-Text," "Light-that-arises-from-the-Reality-Text," and so on.

In addition to the *Reality-Text-Light,* my study will be supplemented by Abhinavagupta's own summary, the *Reality-Text-Essence.* I also use the *Commentary on the Reality-Text-Light* (*Tantrālokaviveka* (*TĀV*)) by Jayaratha (fl. ca. 1225-1275 c.e.), one of the most outstanding representatives of the

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Sanjukta Gupta, et. al. (Leiden: E.J. Brill, 1979), p. 5.

[8] Goudriaan, "Hindu Tantric Literature in Sanskrit," p. 7, n. 31, with reference to *MVT* 1.9.

Trika-influenced Śrīvidyā school in Kashmir.[9] I will also refer to two of AG's intellectual predecessors: the philosopher of language Bhartṛhari (ca. 5th century c.e.), author of the *[The Treatise] on the Saying and The Word* (*Vākyapadīya* (VP)),[10] and Utpaladeva (ca. 925-975 c.e.), Abhinavagupta's teacher's teacher, the founder of the Recognition School, and the author of the *Stanzas on God's Self-Recognition* (*Īśvarapratyabhijñākārikā* (*ĪPK*)). Finally, I will also refer to Kṣemarāja (fl. ca. 1000-1050 c.e.), Abhinavagupta's brilliant and prolific disciple, and author of the *Commentary on the Aphorisms of Śiva* (*Śivasūtravimarśinī* (ŚSV)); and to Maheśvarānanda of Cidambaram (fl. ca. 1175-1225 c.e.), author of the *Blossoming of Great Meaning* (*Mahārthamañjarī* (*MAM*)), one of the most important Recognition-influenced Krama texts produced during the spread of Krama to the South.[11]

Eyewitness Account of the Life of Abhinavagupta

Having stated the purpose of my thesis and having described the texts that I will use, I now turn to Abhinavagupta himself. This brief

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[9] Alexis Sanderson, "Śaivism: Śaivism in Kashmir," in *Encyclopedia of Religion*, vol. 13, p. 17.
[10] See Natalia Isayeva, *From Early Vedanta to Kashmir Shaivism: Gaudapada, Bhartrhari, and Abhinavagupta* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1995), p. 77.
[11] Alexis Sanderson, "Śaivism: Krama Śaivism," in *Encyclopedia of Religion*, vol. 13, p. 14.

biographical sketch will serve to clarify further his special attitude, a "tantric" attitude, toward reality.

In the late tenth century Narasiṃhagupta and his wife Vimalā lived in a dwelling on the bank of the Jhelum River facing a Śiva temple. King Lalitāditya had presented this dwelling to Atrigupta, Narasiṃhagupta's ancestor, some 200 years earlier.[12] Narasiṃhagupta and Vimalā were said to be devout followers of Śiva. Through sexual union in a tantric ritual, while embodying Śiva and Śakti, the couple gave birth to Abhinavagupta. A few years later, AG's mother died while he was still very young. This, it is said, had a deep impact on him and from then on he devoted himself exclusively to his studies and to the worship of Śiva.

The only eyewitness account of Abhinavagupta that survives is a brief poem, entitled "Verses on Meditation" (*Dhyānaślokāḥ*).[13] The poem was penned by one of Abhinavagupta's students, Madhurāja Yogin, the "Nectar-King," a yogin who had travelled to Kashmir from southern India.

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[12] This is described in *TĀ* 37 and has been summarized by Ingalls, *Dhyvanyāloka*, p. 30; my account is a summary of Ingalls's exposition.

[13] This has been translated and discussed by Kanti Chandra Pandey, *Abhinavagupta, An Historical and Philosophical Study*, 2nd ed., The Chowkhamba Sanskrit Studies, vol. 1 (Varanasi: The Chowkhamba Sanskrit Series Office, 1963), pp. 20-3; and J.L. Masson and M. V. Patwardhan, *Śāntarasa and Abhinavagupta's Philosophy of Aesthetics*, Bhandarkar Oriental Series, no. 9 (Poona, India: Bhandarkar Oriental Research Institute, 1969), pp. 38-40. The translation below is my own; nonetheless I have been greatly influenced by their insights. Pandey provides the Sanskrit on p. 738.

Madhurāja also wrote another poem, called "Master-Lord-Reflexive-Awareness" (*Gurunāthaparāmarśa*).[14] As with all Sanskrit compounds, the meaning dwells on several levels.[15] Madhurāja may be referring to the awareness he himself had of Abhinavagupta; the awareness he himself gained through Abhinavagupta; the awareness Abhinavagupta himself might have of Śiva; or the awareness that had itself become Madhurajā's teacher. It is in this poem that Madhurāja discusses a great assembly of religious leaders, teachers, and *yoginīs*, gathering together and as a group proclaiming that Abhinavagupta, no less than an embodiment of Śiva Himself, is their own spiritual teacher; in other words they understand Abhinavagupta to be not only a guru, but, in fact, a guru's guru.[16]

An eyewitness account of this "guru's guru" is provided by Madhurāja in his "Verses on Meditation:"[17]

> In the middle of a garden of grapes, in a pavillion made of crystal, with bright-colored objects pleasing to the senses, with intense fragrances from garlands of flowers, incense, and oil lamps, and other such objects, with walls anointed with sandalwood paste;

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[14] Pandey, *Abhinavagupta*, p. 22.

[15] See the discussion by Agehananda Bharati of his own given name in *The Ochre Robe* (Garden City, N.Y.: Doubleday and Company, 1970), pp. 153-4; and the discussion by Paul Eduardo Muller-Ortega of the first aphorism in the *Aphorisms of Śiva* in "Foreword," in *The Aphorisms of Śiva: The* ŚivaSūtra *with Bhāskara's Commentary, the* Vārttika, trans. Mark S. G. Dyczkowski (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1992), p. xi.

[16] Pandey, *Abhinavagupta*, p. 22.

[17] See note above.

Continually resounding with music and singing, accompanied by dancing, overflowing with crowds of enlightened beings, both men and women, amongst them, on a seat of gold, over the soft ground that has been prepared, and above a canopy with garlands of pearls, he [Abhinavagupta] is sitting, being honored, by a whole group of students, led by his foremost student Kṣemarāja, all gathered at his feet, sitting with attentive and waiting hearts, writing every word he speaks;

with two tantric-ritual partners, standing at his side, holding in one hand a vessel of the Liquid Bliss of Śiva (*śivarasa*)[18] and a basket full of betel-leaf-tonics, and embracing with his other hand sweet limes and lotus blossoms;

Abhinavagupta's eyes are subtly vibrating with spiritual joy, he is marked in ashes on the center of his forehead with the *tilaka* [the three-lined symbol designating him as a devotee of Śiva], on his ear a radiant *rudrākṣa* bead, with a full head of hair tied down with a garland of flowers, and a beard hanging down;

A body flushed with a rosy healthy glow, [as Blue-Throated Śiva] his neck a dark-color shining with a fragrant ointment, wearing a long and loose sacred thread, his dress made of silk, white and dazzling as moonbeams, resting in the yogic posture of the spiritual vital hero;

With one hand lying upon his knee, with a rosary, he clearly manifests the spiritual posture of possessing direct knowledge of the Supreme God Śiva, while the tip of his fingernail of his vibrating left hand, like a lotus flower, emitting light, strikes the lute, causing it to hum with the Primordial Spontaneous Resounding (*dhvani*);

Incarnated as the Blessed Blue-Throated Śiva, out of deep compassion, he has come to the land of Kashmir.

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[18] More will be said about this later.

> May Divine Śiva, who teaches us music and science, yoga and the direct knowledge of God, having taken a new bodily form in the person of Abhinavagupta right before our very own eyes, protect us!

The poem, as Pandey and Masson and Patwardhan have all pointed out, portrays Abhinavagupta as multidimensional, at once a philosopher, a *tāntrika,* and a *rasika.* The dialectic between transcendence of the world and immanence in the world, so essential to AG's philosophy, is clearly evident here. For AG, both transcendence and immanence are characteristics of God, beyond the world and in the world at one and the same time. In the poem we see that as Abhinavagupta lectures on music, he is surrounded by men and women sucking the marrow out of life: dancing, singing, and drinking wine. Such is a first glimpse at the extraordinary fact that in AG's religious system there is no dichotomy between being out of this world and being in this world, experiencing the spiritual bliss of God and experiencing joy in the body. AG thus embodies the tantric spirit as defined in Madeline Biardeau's classical description:

> [*Tantra* is] an attempt to place *kāma,* desire, in every meaning of the word, in the service of liberation ... not to sacrifice this world for liberation's sake, but to reinstate it, in varying ways, within the perspective of salvation.[19]

The poem also emphasizes that AG is simultaneously a master of tantra and the heartful aesthete. (I will say more on the term "heart" in several of my chapters.) Pandey suggests that, most likely, he is giving a commentary on Bharata's *Treatise on Dancing* (*Nāṭyaśāstra*), one of the most famous

[19] Madeline Biardeau, *Hinduism: The Anthropology of a Civilization* (New Delhi: Oxford University Press, 1989), p. 149: quoted in André Padoux, "Tantrism: An Overview," in *Encyclopedia of Religion,* vol. 14, p. 273.

works on Indian aesthetics.[20] This is not insignificant and it suggests that for AG tantra and aesthetics intertwine.

Finally, Madhurāja also highlights AG's sense of vision as well as reminding us that this is a vision that is embodied. Although surrounded by this very worldly scene, AG's eyes continue to watch God, not unlike Śiva on the day of his wedding to Śakti: surrounded by festive activity, Śiva always appeared to be elsewhere. Such was interpreted as Śiva never losing his third eye, his Śiva vision, even in the midst of complete immersion in worldly activity. In this way, Madhurāja again emphasizes the connection between desire and liberation in the vision of AG.

AG's Philosophical Background

Having given a brief biographical sketch, I now want to discuss the philosophical teachings that partially influenced AG. Even when elucidating his tantric vision, AG continually refers back to these teachings, which indeed arose in a tantric context. I must note here, however, that although AG's predecessor Utpaladeva developed a notion of reflexive awareness and although AG in some senses inherits this notion, ultimately, AG's notion is quite different from the one that we find in the philosophical literature beginning with Utpaladeva. Again, as we will see, for AG, reflexive awareness is ultimately rooted in the embodied experience of sexual union.

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[20] Pandey, *Abhinavagupta*, pp. 22-23.

The philosophical teachings may be conveniently described as consisting of two core teachings, the vibration teachings and the recognition teachings, with the latter itself being rooted in the vibration teachings.[21]

The Vibration (*spanda*) Teachings

The Vibration teachings are embodied in two main texts: the *Aphorisms of Śiva (Śivasūtra)*[22] and the *Stanzas on Vibration* (*Spandakārikā*).[23]

Vasugupta (fl. c. 825-875 c.e.) and the *Aphorisms of Śiva* (*Śivasūtra*)

Significantly, the *Aphorisms* arose in a tantric context, based on an esoteric Śaiva tradition similar to the Kālī-based Trika and represented in some layers of the *Jayadrathayāmalatantra*.[24]

According to the tradition, in the ninth century, the sage Vasugupta received a revelation of Śiva. Initiatiating the process in a dream,[25] Śiva

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[21] My account in this section on the philosophical background relies heavily on secondary sources. Especially helpful and which I often followed were Gnoli, *LDSS*, pp. 15-21 ff., and Alexis Sanderson, "Saivism and the Tantric Traditions," in *The World's Religions*, ed. Stewart Sutherland, et. al. (London: Routledge, 1988), pp. 694 ff.

[22] Translated by Raniero Gnoli, in *Testi dello Śivaismo* (Turin: Boringhieri, 1962), pp. 37-48; Lilian Silburn, in *"Śivasūtra" et "Vimarśinī" de Kṣemarāja*, Publications de l'Institut de Civilisation Indienne, fasc. 47, Études sur le Śivaïsme du Cachemire, École Spanda (Paris: Institut de civilisation Indienne avec le concours du C.N.R.S., 1980); Mark Dyczkowski, in *The Aphorisms of Śiva: The* ŚivaSūtra *with Bhāskara's Commentary, the* Vārttika (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1992); and Jaideva Singh, in *"Śiva Sūtras": the Yoga of Supreme Identity* (Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass, 1979).

[23] Translated by Gnoli, in *Testi dello Śivaismo*, pp. 51-82; Mark Dyczkowski, in *The Stanzas on Vibration* (translation with introduction and exposition) (Albany: State University of New York, 1992); and Jaideva Singh, in *The Yoga of Vibration and Divine Pulsation* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1992).

[24] Sanderson, "Saivism and the Tantric Traditions," p. 694.

[25] See Muller-Ortega, "Foreword," in Dyczkowski, *Aphorisms*, on variants of the revelation story.

revealed himself in the form of a text that became known as the *Aphorisms of Śiva*. This revelation marks the beginning of the school known as the "Vibration (*spanda*) School."

In the *TĀ* itself, Abhinavagupta only refers to this text once; in the first chapter he states that ignorance is simply knowledge that fails to completely illuminate reality in its totality.[26] Nonetheless the fact that his star student Kṣemarāja wrote a commentary on the *Aphorisms* indicates the esteem Abhinavagupta had for this text.

Gnoli has noted the centrality of this text for AG and his tradition, seeing the text as pivotal, perhaps anticipating Abhinavagupta's hermeneutics of consciousnes, i.e., his interpretation of all tantric practice in terms of consciousness alone, by some 150 years.[27] One passage that Gnoli highlights states that the God Bhairava, the Awesome One, is revealed to be nothing less than Upsurging-Force (*udyama*). He also points to a second aphorism in which the essential quality of yogic experience is identified as "astonishment" (*vismaya*). For Gnoli, this contains the seeds of the doctrine of wonder (*camatkāra*) (which as we will see is equated by AG with reflexive awareness), where both religious experience and aesthetic experience are characterized by wonder. Gnoli states that as the yogin breaks through to the other side, his old world breaks down and a new world comes rushing through the cracks in the empirical reality. The yogin who is witness to this process responds to the onslaught with pure wonder.

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[26] *TĀ* 1.26: translated by Gnoli, *LDSS*, p. 71.
[27] This paragraph follows Gnoli, *LDSS*, pp. 16-19.

Kallaṭa (fl. c. 850-900 c.e.) and the *Stanzas on Vibration* (*Spandakārikā*)

The Vibration teachings were continued beyond Vasugupta by his star student Kallaṭa in his work, *Stanzas on Vibration*. AG refers to the *Stanzas* at various places in the *TĀ*, including chapter 3,[28] a chapter that will be given special consideration in my next chapter. He also refers to Kallaṭa as "guru in my lineage" (*asmatsaṃtānaguruḥ*) in *TĀ* 28.[29] Kṣemarāja wrote two commentaries on this work.

Like the *Aphorisms*, the *Stanzas* were embraced by the later tradition. One interesting idea in the *Stanzas* is a reference to *māyā* as miraculously accomplishing the game of self-concealment; AG's introduction to what he refers to as the "śakti way towards the realization of God" (discussed in my third chapter) echoes this conception found in the *Stanzas*.[30]

Another important stanza influenced the way Abhinavagupta and his supreme (*parama*) guru Utpaladeva would understand Reflexive Awareness:

> A calm wave is [suddenly] strongly agitated. If one casts his eyes there, in this first instant, one perceives an uprising; or indeed it is the first trembling observed when one closes the fist. [In the same way] when consciousness [up until then] confined in itself becomes

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[28] *TĀ* 3.281.

[29] Noted by Alexis Sanderson, "The Doctrine of the Mālinīvijayottaratantra," in *Ritual and Speculation in Early Tantrism: Studies in Honor of André Padoux*, ed. Teun Goudriaan (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1992), pp. 281-312.

[30] *TĀ* 4.8-11: Sanderson, "Doctrine," pp. 302-3, n. 78.

> oriented toward the construction [of a world], the blooming of this desire is called "surging forth."[31]

I will refer to this important verse again below. Here I only wanted to note the importance this text also held for AG, especially with regard to the notion of Reflexive Awareness.

Sanderson describes the philosophy of the Vibration School as follows.[32] The Vibration School everything participates in one single reality, which is Śiva-Consciousness, the Ground of Being, conceived as "Infinite Pulsating Dynamism" (*spanda*). On one hand, Consciousness is dynamic, continually in motion, and continually vibrating. At the same time, consciousness is nondual. That is to say, only consciousness exists; the universe itself is nothing but consciousness. Consciousness is said to embrace all phenomena, giving rise and continually supporting all subjects, all objects, and all acts of experience.

The term *spanda*, which points to the infinite dynamism of reality as continually in motion, pulsating, vibrating, and throbbing, no doubt retains a sexual connotation. The *Stanzas*, like the *Aphorisms*, were in fact based on an esoteric tantric Śaiva tradition. Significantly, the ritual of sexual union

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[31] *ŚD* I.13b-15b, p. 15: my translation of Michel Hulin, *Le Principe de l'Ego dans la Pensée Indienne Classique: La Notion de Ahaṃkāra* (Paris: Collège de France, 1978), p. 290.
[32] This paragraph and the next paragraphs follow Sanderson, "Śaivism," pp. 694-5.

was central to this tradition which already applied the erotic notion of "vibration" to consciousness, highlighting its dynamic and bipolar nature.

The Self-Recognition Teachings

Somānanda (fl. c. 900-950 c.e.) and *Śiva-Vision* (*Śiva-dṛṣṭi*)

The Vibration School was refined and eventually absorbed by the Self-Recognition School; this school begins with Somānanda ("he who experiences the bliss of the sacrificial nectar") and his work entitled *Śiva-Vision* (*Śivadṛṣṭi*). Somānanda, a master of words and language, not unlike AG and others in the Śaiva traditions of Kashmir, plays with words when he titles his most important text. One meaning is "having a vision of Śiva." However, Somānanda's system was thoroughly nondual, and in fact there was no object called Śiva that one could actually see. Thus, *Śiva-Vision* refers to the act of becoming Śiva and seeing things the way Śiva himself sees, identifying with Śiva and taking on his vision.[33] I will refer to this text again in chapter 3, where I point out its influence on AG in *TĀ* 4.

[33] Douglas Brooks, personal communication.

Utpaladeva (fl. c. 925-975 c.e.) and the *Stanzas on the Lord's Self-Recognition (Īśvarapratyabhijñākārikā)*[34]

The Self-Recognition School was continued by Utpaladeva, the guru of Abhinavagupta's guru Lakṣmaṇagupta, in his *Stanzas on the Lord's Self-Recognition* (*Īśvarapratyabhijñākārikā*). According to the Self-Recognition School, all human beings are already enlightened, always already knowing God. Thus, the process of liberation is tantamount to remembering or recognizing something that has always been known, but somehow obscured.[35] The task for all human beings is to recognize that they are already Śiva, that is, to recognize Śiva as the foundation of one's consciousness, one's innermost identity. Śiva waits for this recognition, the definitive act of liberation, as in a sense it is Śiva recollecting himself.

The gist of their philosophy is summarized by a story cited by Utpaladeva in his IPK where Śiva disguises himself as the unknown and mysterious lover of the beloved, the devotee; Śiva visits the devotee until he is finally recognized as the original lover from the primordial past. Only at

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[34] Translated by Raffaele Torella, in *The* Īśvarapraytabhijñākārikā *of Utpaladeva with the Author's* Vṛtti (critical edition and annotated translation), Serie Orientale Roma, LXXI (Roma: Istituto Italiano per il Medio ed Esremo Oriente, 1994).

[35] See Paul Eduardo Muller-Ortega's "Foreword," in Jaideva Singh, *The Doctrine of Recognition* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1990), pp. xii-xiii, for a concise summary of how this paradox is explained in Recognition philosophy.

that point does the true intertwining take place, the individual's identity dissolving as he penetrates into the Being of Śiva.

These then are the philosophical teachings that partially influenced AG. What will make AG's worldview different is that he grounds his philosophy in tantra. Tantra in other words becomes a "speculative paradigm" for AG.[36]

The Term *Vimarśa*

With that as sufficient background, I can now begin to elucidate some of the various connotations that the term *vimarśa* had for AG. I will begin by exploring further the root "*mṛś*" and the prefix *vi-*.

As I have already indicated one of the primary meanings of the root *mṛś*, is "to touch." It also means "to stroke, grasp, take hold."[37] In the form *marśana*, found in the *MBh*, it mostly means "touching a woman."[38] From these primary meanings it comes to mean "to take hold of mentally,

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[36] I have taken this term from Edwin Gerow who has convincingly shown that aesthetics was a "speculative paradigm" for AG. In other words, AG's Recognition philosophy was ultimately rooted in AG's aesthetics. I am making the same argument for Tantra. See Edwin Gerow, "Abhinavagupta's Aesthetics as a Speculative Paradigm," *Journal of the American Oriental Society* 114, no. 2 (April-June 1994): 186-208.

[37] Monier Monier-Williams, *A Sanskrit-English Dictionary* (London: Oxford University Press, 1899; Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass, 1984); and Charles Rockwell Lanman, *A Sanskrit Reader* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1963).

consider." The implication is that one knows an object by touching or making contact with that object. A Sanskrit cognate of the root *mṛś* is the root *mṛj* which means "to rub off, wipe away." Latin cognates for these terms are *mulcêre*, meaning "to stroke;" and *mulgêre*, meaning "to milk." Another Sanskrit cognate is the root *mṛd*, "to press, rub, rub against, touch, pass through."

The Prefix *Vi-* in *Vimarśa*: Back and Forth

AG understands the prefix *vi-* in at least two ways so that *vimarśa* may be translated as either "touching forth," or "touching back." AG uses both of these senses simultaneously, so that *vimarśa* becomes a "touching back and forth." AG had both of these senses in mind.

It is important to stress that AG was constantly aware of etymology and the various levels of meaning of any one term, as not all Abhinavagupta scholars agree with this. Here I note that in Alper's study of *vimarśa*, he suggested that the meaning of the term would only be derived from usage, not etymology.

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[38] A possible Slavic parallel to the root *mṛś* is **mrkati* meaning "to copulate." Cited in Alper, "Svabhāvam," pp. 190-191, n. 1.

However, this is strange in that Alper was quite aware of the "latent metaphorical force" of the term that should be kept in mind even when approaching Utpaladeva's theology.[39] AG's dedication to delineating a whole theory of the "creative metaphorical force" (*dhvani*) of words can only suggest of course that AG, a master and lover of words, is aware of any word's roots and symbolic connections. This is apparent from the creative etymology that he borrowed (from the *Tattvarakṣāvidhāna*, the *Nigamatantra*, and the *Triśirobhairavatantra*) for the term *visarga*, which in his mind was identical to the term *vimarśa*. AG writes:

> Thus the emission is threefold: the unifying friction, the emergent, and the quiescent; [it is called "emission"] since it emits the varied (*vicitra*) emission and [it is] where the emission returns back (*vigata*).[40]

The emission then moves both forwards (with the sense of differentiation) and backwards (with the sense of unification), and these senses are applicable to the term *vimarśa* itself.

On one hand then, for AG, the prefix *vi-* also denotes the sense of "back." AG would be able to find justification in the rules of Sanskrit; the

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[39] Alper, "Svabhāvam," p. 190.

[40] *TĀ* 29.140a-141b:
trividho visarga ittham saṅghaṭṭaḥ proditastathā śāntaḥ/
visṛjati yato vicitraḥ sargo vigataśca yatra sarga iti//140//
śrītattvarakśaṇe śrīnigame triśiromate ca tatproktam/

term *vimukha* for example means "having the face backwards." Applying this to *vimarśa*, the term literally means a "touching back," applied to both Śiva and the individual.

On the other hand, the prefix *vi-* has the sense of "distribution, distinction, arrangement, and order." Thus, *viśiṣ* means "to distinguish;" *visṛj* means "to emit;" *virudh* means "to shoot forth;" *vicar* means "to expand;" and *vidhā* means "to apportion." It is instructive to see the relevance of this same prefix to the theology of Kṛṣṇa:

> ... in the *Bhagavadgītā*, *Kṛṣṇa* is called *Māyā-vin*, i.e. possessing the capacity of *Māyā*, measuring, when through his *vi-bhūti*, or dissection into all *bhūtas*, all definite beings, he reproduces the world-emanation in all its forms. Through his *Māyā*, then, *Kṛṣṇa* reproduces all types of persons and inanimate objects--a most characteristic mixture! *Kṛṣṇa*, in other words, makes himself manifold in appearance, dissects himself into different forms as *vy-akta* and *vy-āpta* (the prefix *vi* expressing divergence, disjunction).[41]

Applying a similar notion of divergence to *vimarśa*, the term means "touching forth or out." When used as a characteristic of Śiva, it means that Śiva touches forth, that is, Śiva opens up and out. In other words, the manifestation takes place and this requires Śiva to distinguish and

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[41] Betty Heiman, *Indian and Western Philosophy: A Study in Contrasts* (London: George Allen and Unwin, 1937), p. 51.

distribute himself. Most significantly, Śiva performs in this way precisely in sexual union with Śakti, when he touches Śakti.

Rubbing Off, Milking, Extracting

We also see AG playing with symbolic connections when in the context of using the term *vimṛṣṭa,* which is a past participle of both *vi-mṛj* and *vi-mṛś.* As a past participle of the former, it indicates "rubbed off," and as a past participle of the latter, it indicates "thought." In the *TS,* Abhinavagupta writes:

> In this stainless mirror of consciousness, the entire sparkling own-essence
> whose form has been thought secretly following the taste of reflecting truly shines.[42]

The same passage lends itself to various other connotations, as demonstrated by the translation offered by Masson and Patwardhan:

> The whole of one's very own essence, vibrating in the pure mirror of consciousness becomes manifest by itself; its (the mirror's) form having been rubbed quickly with the fluid in the form of *āmarśana.*[43]

Also, at *TĀ* 4.118b-120a, AG uses the term *vimardana* while redefining notions of impurity, purity, and bathing following his

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[42] *TS,* p. 19:
saṃvedananirmaladarpaṇe'smin sakalaṃ sphuratnijasāram/
āmarśanarasasarahasyavimṛṣṭarūpaṃ satyaṃ bhāti//

hermeneutics of interiority. Impurity, for AG, is the holding on to the idea that the body is separate from Śiva. Purity then would be cleansing oneself of this wrong view, literally, "rubbing it away" (*vimardana*). Seeing the body as the vessel of pure consciousness, the temple of God, dissolves this impure process of differentiating. Only then does the practitioner claim his primordial freedom, in identity with the Omnipotent Lord, as he recognizes that he always dwells in Pure Consciousness.

> The mind which distinguishes these (principles) whose nature is Śiva (as being separate from Śiva), that is impurity. Purity is understood as the opposite; it is the rubbing away of that thought. Thus, for the one who sees his own body as being a vessel identical to consciousness, the process of distinguishing melts away. He dwells, as the All-Powerful Lord, in the state of pure consciousness and freedom.[44]

Vi-mṛś then is literally "to rub away" or "to purify." On a concrete level this refers to the rubbing away of impurities; on the other hand, from the

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[43] Masson and Patwardhan, *Śāntrarasa*, p. 59, n. 1.
[44] *TĀ* 4.118b-120a:
śivātmakeṣvapyeteṣu buddhiryā vyatirekiṇī//118//
saivāśuddhiḥ parākhyātā śuddhastaddhīvimardanam/
evaṃ svadehaṃ bodhaikapātraṃ galitabhedakam//119//
paśyansaṃvittimātratve svatantre tiṣṭhati prabhuḥ/
See also, in reference to this passage: Paul Eduardo Muller-Ortega, *The Triadic Heart of Śiva; Kaula Tantricism of Abhinavagupta in the Non-Dual Shaivism of Kashmir* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1989), p. 150 (at n. 20); Mark Dyczkowski, *The Doctrine of Vibration: An Analysis of the Doctrines and Practices of Kashmir Shaivism* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1987), pp. 140-141 (at n. 3); and Dyczkowski, *Doctrine*, p. 141 (at n. 18).

perspective of what remains, this refers to the drawing away of the concentrated essence.

In Abhinavagupta's hermeneutics of consciousness, these connotations give force to his more abstract meanings. In other words, this "drawing away" becomes "extracting the essence." Further, insofar as "essence" becomes "meaning," "extracting" becomes nothing less than "abstracting." (I will return to this issue of meaning in my concluding chapter.)

Emissional Power

I want to give one final example to again hint at the broad semantic range of the term in the hands of AG.

Vimarśa is also explicitly identified as the "emissional power of the Godhead" (*visarga*). The "emissional power" has various connotations. One important connotation is that of "renewal and nourishing." This applies to both the cosmos and consciousness. Dyczkowski explains that applied to consciousness, there is a continual emission that regenerates reality; all things are continually renewed and nourished. Such emission is identified with the sixteenth digit or the hidden digit of the moon, which also renews all things. The moon itself through its movement is understood as regenerating the cosmos. The moon, Dyczkowski emphasizes, is understood to be *soma* or *amṛta*, the cosmic source of life that is continually

poured out into the universe. The moon continually empties itself and then refills itself in an unending process. Each of the digits of the moon is grounded in the sixteenth digit or the hidden digit; thus each phase of the moon, and indeed the whole universe, is continually supported by the invisible source which gives life.[45]

There are resonances here with the kula sacrifice in which through emission one renews themselves; one emits into the *yoginī*, who returns the emission, to guarantee self-regeneration. *Vimarśa* as emission nourishes both the *yoginī* and the yogi and the whole universe. And there are obvious resonances between this sacrifice and the vedic sacrifice. Thus, *vimarśa* as emission also relates to *vimarśa* as sacrifice, both the internal sacrifice (*antaryāga*) (which I discuss in chapter 3) and the *kula* sacrifice (which I discuss in chapter 4).

Previous Translations of the *Mṛś* Terms

Before looking at the details chapter by chapter of AG's employment of *vimarśa*, I want to discuss some important scholarship on the *mṛś* terms.

I have chosen to look at here the following scholars: Paul Eduardo Muller-Ortega, Raffaele Torella, David Peter Lawrence, Bruno M. J. Nagel, Alexis Sanderson, and Natalia Isayeva. These scholars may be conveniently divided into three categories according to their methods of interpretation.

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[45] Dyczkowski, *Aphorisms*, pp. 190-191, n. 2. See also Muller-Ortega, *Triadic Heart*, p. 226 on digits.

Torella, Lawrence, and Nagel continue, in a sense, the tradition of Harvey Alper in staying close to the Recognition philosophical texts. The weakness of this method is that it ignores the tantric connections. Muller-Ortega's work is significant in that he interprets the term with reference to AG's tantric works. Sanderson's work is significant in that he emphasizes the fact that AG was using Recognition philosophy in order to interpret earlier tantric ritual. Isayeva follows the example of Sanderson and recognizes the erotic nature of AG's discussions of consciousness. I see my work as following through on the insights of Sanderson and Isayeva. What I will show is that not only is AG overcoding earlier practices when he uses the term, but in doing so, his interpretation of consciousness is affected. Again, his model of consciousness is erotic precisely because it is charged by the embodied experience of sexual union.

Paul Eduardo Muller-Ortega[46]

For Paul Eduardo Muller-Ortega, *vimarśa* is "the capacity of consciousness to be conscious of itself."[47] Muller-Ortega has noted the connections between *vimarśa* and various other terms, including *visarga, bindu,* and *spanda,* as well as its importance in the context of tantric practice. Muller-Ortega observes that *bindu* represents the finite knowing subject and

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[46] Sanderson thinks that Muller-Ortega, by overemphasizing the meditative and experiential aspects of AG's worldview, underestimates the ritual dimension. Alexis Sanderson, Review of *The Triadic Heart of Śiva,* by Paul E. Muller-Ortega, *Bulletin of the School of Oriental and African Studies* 53 (1990): p. 356.
[47] Muller-Ortega, *Triadic Heart,* p. 96.

visarga, made up of two *bindus*, represents the "inherently self-referential capacity of consciousness."[48] Further, in his discussion of the "immortal moon," with reference to *TĀ* 3.111b-113a, he writes:

> *Bindu*, the consciousness-point, consists of both "undivided light" (*prakāśa*) and a "sounding, vibrating roar, vibrating hum, vibratory sound" (*nāda*).

Muller-Ortega identifies this vibration with *vimarśa*. Thus *prakāśa-vimarśa* is reduplicated in the consciousness-point (*bindu*). Muller-Ortega describes *vimarśa* as the sound vibration created as illumination continuously turns back on, doubles back on, and refers back to itself as it maintains consciousness.[49] He then notes that meditation techniques employ this capacity of consciousness; thus it lies at the basis of Trika *sādhanā*.[50] In particular finite consciousness turns back on itself, at first contacting the objects of consciousness, and ultimately contacting itself. Thus, Muller-Ortega states, this state is recognition, when the beam of consciousness is only conscious of itself.[51]

Raffaele Torella

Torella works primarily in the Recognition texts (as do Lawrence and Nagel, whom I discuss below). Torella translates *vimarśa* as "reflective awareness." He borrows this phrase from Matilal, who used it as a

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[48] Muller-Ortega, *Triadic Heart*, p. 126.
[49] Muller-Ortega, *Triadic Heart*, p. 156.
[50] Muller-Ortega, *Triadic Heart*, p. 96.
[51] Muller-Ortega, *Triadic Heart*, p. 126.

translation of the term *anuvyavasāya*. He notes that Dyczkowski uses this phrase also. He has consciously chosen a term that is both sufficiently general and sufficiently specific to be used meaningfully in a wide variety of contexts. Torella has suggested different connotations for each of the *mṛś* terms. He suggests that *vimarśa* may have an element "more intimate and analytic;" *parāmarśa* one "more instantaneous and indefinite;" and *pratyavamarśa* an element highlighting "introjection and return to the subject." In the end however he suggests that the texts indicate that although the terms do have different connotations they are used interchangeably. And thus he has chosen to translate all the *mṛś* terms with the one phrase "reflective awareness." Torella identifies the strong relationship between *vimarśa* and *camatkāra* which he translates as "astonished, wondrous, savouring," provocatively hinting that *camatkāra* is *vimarśa* "enriched with a strong aesthetic connotation." We will discuss *vimarśa*'s connection to *camatkāra* again below.[52]

David Peter Lawrence

David Peter Lawrence discusses *vimarśa* in the context of the Śaiva theory of Recognition.[53] He argues that *vimarśa* and related terms must be understood in the context of two other sets of terms; with *vimarśa* terms, these sets of terms form the essential core of Recognition theory: (1)

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[52] Torella, IPK, p. XXIV, n. 32.

[53] Here I am summarizing David Peter Lawrence, *Rediscovering God with Transcendental Argument: A Contemporary Interpretation of Monistic Kashmiri Śaiva Philosophy* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1999), pp. 86-87

"recognition" terms (*pratyabhijñā* and related terms) and (2) "synthesis, association" terms (*anusaṃdhāna* and related terms). It is interesting to note in this regard that Isayeva has observed that the term *pratyavamarśa* and cognates were as widely used by Śaivites as *pratyabhijñāna*, translating both as "recognition." Translating *vimarśa* as "active, powerful knowing," "knowing as energy," she suggests that *pratyavamarśa* for AG was the union of *prakāśa* and *vimarśa*.[54]

Lawrence also notes that *vimarśa* terms have the specific meanings of "linguistic apprehension, judgment, reflection, (and) apprehension." All of these meanings indicate, according to Lawrence, that in general *vimarśa* has a "recognitive structure." Lawrence points out that the *vimarśa* terms are tightly interwoven with the other terms, all referring to each other, and creating a web of meaning centered on the notion of "recognitive ascertainment" or "recognition." The relation to the synthesis terms leads to thinking of *vimarśa* as "gathering together;" and here we are reminded that in the Vedic ritual it is precisely a gathering together, in the form of a gathering of fires, that leads to rebuilding God, in the form of Prajāpati.

Bruno M. J. Nagel

Bruno M. J. Nagel connects *vimarśa* with "levels of noticing." Nagel agrees with Frauwallner that *vimarśa* is some kind of judgment. In gross levels of speech where there is some kind of objectifying taking place,

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[54] Isayeva, *From Early Vedanta to Kashmir Shaivism*, p. 115, n. 74.

vimarśa has the form of a judgment. At the same time, Nagel wants to stress that even here there is some noticing of the true Self. Thus arguments for the evidence of Self have a special status because they lead to a higher degree of noticing. Nagel also suggests that levels of the Word may correspond to different levels of noticing; thus the highest level of noticing, Recognition, may be identified to the highest level of Word.[55] Nagel also refers to Frauwallner who interpreted *vimarśa* as "a judgment accompanied by inner thought-talk" ("ein von Denksprechen begleitetes Urteil").[56]

David Shulman

Here I want to also mention the suggestions made by David Shulman. Shulman suggests that *vimarśa* may have a connotation similar to that often carried by *dhyāna*.[57] Not only does *dhyāna* have a "cognitive" aspect; it also has a "transformative" or "generative" aspect arising out of an inner perception. Shulman points to the revelation scene in chapter 6 of the *Rāmāyaṇa*. In an epiphany, Rāma finally recognizes that he is God. This recognition begins with Sītā responding to Rāma's cruel and insensitive treatment of her. Sītā's words and actions are the beginning of Rāma's epiphany; they make him think. The revelation continues with words of

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[55] Bruno M. J. Nagel, "Unity and Contradiction: Some Arguments in Utpaladeva and Abhinavagupta for the Evidence of the Self as Śiva," *Philosophy East and West* 45, no. 4 (October 1995): pp. 523-524, n. 47. Nagel's interpretation seems particularly relevant to AG's use of a *mṛś* term at *TĀ* 4.11a-12b. I discuss this verse in my chapter 3.
[56] Erich Frauwallner, *Aus Der Philosophie Der Śivaitischen Systeme,* Deutsche Akademie Der Wissenschaften Zu Berlin Vortrage Und Schriften, no. 78 (Berlin: Akademie-Verlag, 1962): noted and translated by Bruno Nagel, "Unity and Contradiction," p. 523, n. 47.
[57] David Shulman, personal communication.

Brahmā and other gods. Finally, it all comes together, it dawns on Rāma that he is not mortal; he himself is God. With this new recognition, Rāma is able to be united with his beloved again and experience happiness again.

Alexis Sanderson

For Alexis Sanderson, *vimarśa* is understood to be "self-representation." This self-representation may be applied to the Absolute. Sanderson notes that in the *MVT* AG argues that the Absolute contains both plurality and unity as modes of its own self-representation.[58] He also notes that levels of self-representation are correlated with doctrines, so that the various modes of the Absolute through the process of manifestation are reflected on the level of revelation, with the highest purest mode of revelation having various manifestations.[59] Self-representation is also applied to the Trika initiate:

> . . . for the Tantric devotee of the Kālī-self the cosmos-projecting power and this slavery within himself to Vedic injunction were identical. He represented his consciousness as projecting itself to appear as though other than itself, facing and determined by what it was not and manifesting in the same movement the injunctive and metaphysical systems of the powerless path of purity as the formalised reflection of this contracted mode of awareness. His idealism in the Tantric domain was the evocation of an omnipotent,

[58] Sanderson, "Abhinavagupta," p. 8.

[59] Sanderson, "Purity and Power Among the Brahmans of Kashmir," in *The Category of the Person: Anthropological and Philosophical Perspectives*, ed. Michael Carrithers, Steven Collins, and Steven Lukes (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1986), p. 212, n. 81.

> all-containing identity immune to this self-imposed tyranny of extrinsicist inhibition."[60]

Liberation is recognition that one is identical to the Light/Manifestation that is free and continually immerses itself in the activity of Representation on both the macrocosmic level (the universe) and the microcosmic level (the individual).

In later work, Sanderson simply translates *vimarśa* as "representation" but explains that such representation is necessarily self-representation, in that it is always the Self, i.e., the Self in the form of Śiva-who-is-Manifestation. Nonetheless the Self may represent itself as either subject or object; thus the Recognition teachings primarily refer to it as "representation" and then differentiate two types of representation, self-representation (or subject- or I-representation) and not-self-representation (or object- or this-representation).[61] When object-representation or duality predominates, one is in a state of consciousness known as the individual. When subject-representation or nonduality predominates, one is in a state of consciousness known as Śiva.[62]

Natalia Isayeva

Natalia Isayeva translates *vimarśa* as dynamic, active, powerful self-awareness or knowing, emphasizing its link with energy (*śakti*); she notes the ever-evolving aspect of *vimarśa* and its link with Primordial Speech.[63]

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[60] Sanderson, "Purity and Power," p. 200.
[61] Sanderson, "Doctrine," p. 288, n. 32.
[62] Sanderson, "Doctrine," p. 295.
[63] See Isayeva, *From Early Vedanta to Kashmir Shaivism*, pp. 31, 115, 138, 145, and 184.

Most important for this dissertation is her further insight on the erotic aspects of *vimarśa*. She observes that it is inseparably intertwined with *prakāśa* in erotic union. *Prakāśa*, complementing *vimarśa*, is seen as the quiet aspect of pure consciousness. Isayeva describes this consciousness as self-luminosity, or the radiance of contemplation which is Śiva. In this regard, she also notes that *vimarśa* is sometimes referred to as the red *bindu* while prakāśa is referred to as the white *bindu*.[64] Again she emphasizes the erotic nature of *vimarśa*, here as the red drop, which represent the erotic energies of tension, striving, and flashing up. Further, for Isayeva, *bindu* is not only unity but potential for multiplying; the *bindu*, as throbbing luminosity, phonic energy reverberating, contains the urge to emanate. This urge to emanate and go beyond one's self, to transcend and transgress is, according to Isayeva, the dynamic urge to fully know one's self, to step outside of oneself and reflect back. This is the primordial characteristic of a Śiva that continually overflows with potencies; it is these energies precisely through which Śiva expresses his freedom. AG will connect these energies with the energies of the heart and the erotic-mystical practices associated with the energies of the heart. Isayeva writes:

> [*B*]*indu* symbolizes the moment of coming together, of erotic union between Śiva and Śakti. It is usually presented as an intermingling of two colours: Śiva is the reflective, steady glow of white light (*prakāśa*), and Śakti is the tense, straining and dynamic flashing up of

[64] See also André Padoux, *Vac: The Concept of the Word in Selected Hindu Tantras*, trans. Jacques Gontier, The SUNY Series in the Shaiva Traditions of Kashmir, ed. Harvey Alper (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1990), on the *bindu*.

> red (*vimarśa*). This point already bears in itself both unity and potential diversity, a potential multiplying, creation.[65]

I will return to Isayeva's interpretation in my conclusion.

[65] Isayeva, *From Early Vedanta to Kashmir Shaivism*, pp. 30-1, n. 30.

Chapter II
Reflexive Awareness and the Śambhu Way towards Realization
(*Vimarśa* in *Tantrāloka* 3)

This chapter discusses AG's use of *mṛś* terms in two sections found in chapter 3 of the *TĀ*, entitled "The Śambhu Way towards Realization" (*śāṃbhavopāya*). The two sections are: the gradual rising of (levels of) reflexive awareness (*parāmarśodayakramaḥ*) (*TĀ* 3.65a-200a; pp. 425-544); and the non-separation of reflexive awareness from *mantra*, etc. (*mantrādyabhinnarūpatvam*) (*TĀ* 3.200b-293b; pp. 544-616).

What is Trika Śaivism?

Before discussing the details of the Śambhu way it is necessary to provide background on Trika Śaivism.[1] Especially important for understanding AG's worldview is the fact that it is pervaded by an erotico-mystical substrate known as "Kaulism." Sanderson explains that AG's Trika is rooted in a visionary tradition that developed in three phases.

In the first phase, called "Trika I" by Sanderson, the visionary-practitioners seized upon the power of a central triad of goddesses, the

[1] This paragraph and the next three paragraphs are, for the most part, direct summaries of Alexis Sanderson, "Śaivism: Trika Śaivism," in *Encyclopedia of Religion*, vol. 13, 15-6.

benevolent Parā and the two terrible deities at her side Parāparā and Aparā. This triadic vision and power cult is connected to the cremation grounds cult of the eight mothers who take form in families or clans (*kulas*) of *yoginīs*; the *yoginīs* themselves are either spiritual beings or human females embodying the goddesses. Here practitioners are spiritually bound to a special clan, the *yoginīs* of which they propitiate in order to extract power.

In the second phase, "Trika II," the triad of Goddesses is overtaken by the Black Goddess (*Kālī*), also known as the "Swallower of Time" (*Kālasaṃkarṣiṇī*); the Swallower transcends the three other goddesses while at the same time manifesting herself as them. During this phase, the Black Goddesses' underlings, the twelve consciousness-goddesses, also eventually become incorporated into the Trika worldview.

Trika reaches its peak in the third phase, "Trika III," with the life and work of Abhinavagupta. AG uses the Recollection philosophy to overtake the Trika I power tradition and reinterpret it in terms of consciousness; by doing so AG places Trika within the mainstream of religious practice in the Kashmir of his day, offsetting the position of dominance previously held by Śaiva Siddhānta.

The most advanced ritual for Trika III is the ritual of sexual intercourse, a ritual that had already become central in the Kaula traditions through a process of interiorization. Kaulism went beyond the cult of the eight mothers by focusing on sex rather than death, that is, it eliminated the external cremation grounds aspects and both retained and reinterpreted the practice of extracting power through the *yoginīs* by way of sexual intercourse.

AG's hermeneutics of consciousness is precisely a continuation and intensification of this process of interiorization already set in motion by Kaulism.

Sanderson refers to AG's interpretation of the climax of the Kaula ritual as "meta-aesthetics." This evocative term goes unexplained by Sanderson and it is necessary to say what I think he means by such.[2] I take Sanderson to be signaling that AG both retains and goes beyond his own aesthetics in which the highest experience is the experience of bliss for the person-with-heart able to transcend his own self and relive the consciousness embodied in the work of art. On one hand, AG is practicing

aesthetics in that he sees the high point of Kaula ritual as in fact a type of aesthetic experience. On the other hand, he goes beyond aesthetics (and thus his teaching may be rightly called a "meta-aesthetics") in that by interpreting tantric practice in terms of aesthetics, he in fact goes beyond the domain of standard aesthetics, embracing for the first time in the history of Indian aesthetics a very special type of religious performance as in fact paradigmatically aesthetic. For AG, the rite of sexual intercourse with the messenger (*dūtī*) becomes the highest type of aesthetic activity and experience. It is a "super-aesthetic" experience in that the person-with-heart experiences at once both religious and aesthetic ecstasy. Sanderson explains that the *tāntrika* recollects the all-containing and overflowing dynamism of ultimate reality. This reality becomes identified with the absolute self, shimmering in blissful consciousness as the essence immanent in the triad of goddesses, the very goddesses worshipped by other Trika practitioners at a lower level. The ultimate "I" becomes experienced as radiating outward through the senses as nothing less than the whole universe.

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[2] In "Śaivism," p. 680, Sanderson uses the terms "aesthetics" and "aesthetic" by themselves: "The Kaulas translated this visionary fantasy into the aesthetic terms of mystical

As will be seen, AG's model of "phonematic recollection," equated with the Śambhu way, the topic of *TĀ* 3, leads to the same experience of dynamism that is reached in the sexual ritual. I will return to this idea at the end of this chapter. For now, I note that AG in fact concludes his discussion of *TĀ* 3 with a description of the "intuition of this dynamism."[3] AG writes:

> "In my very self, in the sky of consciousness, illuminating the universe, I am the creator, whose nature is the universe!" For one who proclaims such, the Bhairava-state [is attained]. "The entire aggregate of the six paths is truly mirrored within me. I am the maintainer!" [When] such has become apparent, this is the state of being transformed into the universe. "The universe dissolves in me, crested by the flames of the ever-risen Great Consciousness!" Seeing such one is pacified. "I am Śiva precisely, who burns down the sacrificial house of the dream cycle, wherein dwells infinite and manifold existence." Thus, the oblation-eater trembles.[4]
>
> The entire world, in its great variety, arises out of Me; and likewise [the universe becomes fully] grown in Me; and then when dissolved,

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experience.... [The Yoginis] shine *within* cognition as its aesthetic form."

[3] See Alexis Sanderson, "Maṇḍala and Agamic Identity in the Trika of Kashmir," in *Mantra et Diagrammes Rituels dans l'Hindouisme*, ed. Andre Padoux (Paris: Centre National de la Recherche Scientifique, 1986), p. 188 and p. 188, n. 87.

[4] *TĀ* 3.283a-286b:
svātmanyeva cidākāśe viśvamasmyavabhāsayan/
sraṣṭā viśvātmaka iti prathayā bhairavātmatā//283//
ṣaḍadhvajātaṃ nikhilaṃ mayyeva pratibimbitam/
shtitikartāhamasmiti sphuṭeyaṃ viśvarūpatā//284//
sadoditamahābodhajvālājaṭilatātmani/
viśvaṃ dravati mayyetaditi paśyanpraśāmyati//285//
anantacitrasadgarbhasaṃsārasvapnasadmanaḥ/
ploṣakaḥ śiva evāhamityullāsī hutāśanaḥ//286//

> here there is no more. Therefore in this way, [the one] who would see, through the unification of creation, maintenance, and dissolution, [the totality] as without parts, that one indeed trembles; he has attained the fourth state.[5]

With that as background, I now turn to a discussion of the Śambhu way, the topic of *TĀ* 3.

The Śambhu Way towards Realization

Here in *TĀ* 3 AG expounds the nature of what he terms the "Śambhu way towards realization (*śāṃbhavopaya*)." Śambhu, the Kind One, is also a name of Śiva. As such, Śambhu, along with Śakti and the individual (*aṇu* or *nara*), is part of a co-essential triad,[6] with each member corresponding to, among other things, a particular way towards realization (*upāya*). Thus, following his discussion of the Śambhu way, AG gives equal time, in the following chapters,[7] to the Śakti way and the individual way. There is also

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[5] *TĀ* 3.287a-287b:
jagatsarvaṃ mattaḥ prabhavati vibhedena bahudhā tathāpyetadrūḍhaṃ mayi vigalite tvatra na paraḥ/
taditthaṃ yaḥ sṛṣṭisthitivilayamekīkṛtivaśādanaṃśaṃ paśyetsa sphurati hi turīyaṃ padamitaḥ//287//

[6] Sanderson, "Trika Śaivism," p. 15.

[7] Chapters 4 and 5 are termed "Śakti Way" and "Individual Way," respectively. See also Rastogi's "Foreword," p. xx and p. 252, n. 14, in Swami Chetanananda, *Dynamic Stillness*, 2 vols. (Cambridge, MA: Rudra Press, 1990-1). Rastogi notes that actually, according to JR at least, chapters 5-12 and 15 discuss the individual way. Sanderson believes that chapters 5-12 and 15-33 discuss the individual way.

a fourth way termed the "non-way" (*anupāya*), discussed by AG in *TĀ* 2, thus making four ways in all.

This fourfold scheme, also referred to as the "Fourfold Gnosis" (*jñānacatuṣka*), became in the hands of AG a way of synthesizing all the various tantric lineages and their practices, allowing for individual distinctions, yet embracing each as a part of Trika.[8] Dyczkowski has discussed this hermeneutical device in detail,[9] noting that each way towards realization is in fact not one specific method, but rather a principle, with each type of religious practice being based on one or more of these principles.[10] The Śambhu, Śakti, and individual ways share the trait of involving some type of mediation; whereas the non-way refers to direct realization without the mediation of any means, and, thus, is often not even thought of as a proper way.[11] All three other ways are understood as leading to this non-way.[12]

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[8] Torella, IPK, p. XXXVII.
[9] Here I am taking and adapting a short section in my Review of *Sovereign All-Creating Mind—The Motherly Buddha: A Translation of the* Kun byed rgyal po'i mdo, by E.K. Neumaier-Dargyay, *Philosophy East and West* 46, no. 1 (January 1996): pp. 108-109.
[10] Dyczkowski, *Doctrine of Vibration*, pp. 171-172.
[11] Dyczkowski, *Doctrine of Vibration*, pp. 175-180.
[12] Dyczkowski, *Doctrine of Vibration*, p. 175.

More particularly, the individual way relies on yogic and ritual action[13] and is also called the "way of action." In the Śakti way, discursive thinking is used in order to reach a state of nondiscursive thinking.[14] This way is also called the "way of knowledge."[15] Finally in the Śambhu way recollection occurs, without any contemplative action and prior to any type of dualistic thought, at the moment of the will, or "pre-cognitive impulse" (*icchā*), always a part of the human condition as an interior pulsation.[16] This way is also called the "way of creative impulse." AG himself describes the Śambhu way as follows:

> This penetration (*āveśa*) consists in the identification with the highest nature of Śambhu, the Original One who is inseparable from his Śakti, due to the dissolution of the nature of the individual self devoid of freedom.[17]
>
> Śāmbhava communion (*samāveśa*) consists in a consciousness free from imaginative thought (*avikalpa*) and independent from creative contemplation (*bhāvanā*) etc., which attains the state of identity with Śiva.[18]

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[13] Sanderson, "Trika," p. 16.
[14] See my next chapter.
[15] Also on the Śakti and Individual ways see Sanderson, "Maṇḍala," p. 173, n. 9.
[16] Sanderson, "Trika," p. 16.
[17] AG, *TĀ* I, pp. 173-174: translated by Baumer, "Four Spiritual Ways," p. 15.
[18] AG, *TĀ* I, p. 178: translated by Baumer, "Four Spiritual Ways," p. 15.

Abhinavagupta's Psychocosmology

Now much of *TĀ* 3 appears to be a detailed discussion of the fifty Sanskrit phonemes. The obvious question then is: what is the precise relationship between phonematics and the Śambhu way? The concise answer is that AG in fact takes the Śambhu way to be nothing other than the reflexive awareness of the set of the fifty Sanskrit phonemes (*varṇaparāmarśa*).[19]

To understand this it is necessary to understand the metaphysical and soteriological presuppositions of AG. In fact, while AG does discuss phonematics, at the same time he freely switches to discussions of metaphysics, gnosis, and yoga; this is especially the case in AG's discussion of the connection between reflexive awareness and *mantra*. The suggestion is that for AG phonematics is inseparable from Trika discourse and practice. Indeed, AG envisions the emission of the universe as well its retraction in terms of the Sanskrit language.

Moreover, this cosmology, whether described in terms of categories of reality or in terms of the fifty Sanskrit phonemes, is precisely a "psychocosmology." The psychological plane, that is, the microcosmos, or

reality at the level of the human being, is always a reflection of the cosmic plane, that is, the macrocosmos, reality at the level of the divine.

This conflation of the individual and the divine, and hence of soteriology and cosmology, is not unique to AG. For example, as Biardeau has extensively shown in "Purāṇic Cosmogony,"[20] the cosmology described in the Purāṇas already reflected yogic ideas, while at the same time the yogic conception of the world itself subsumed the Vedic-Brahmāṇical sacrificial and cosmological conceptions. Yoga in other words interiorizes both sacrifice and cosmology. In turn, in the Purāṇas, cosmology becomes discussed in terms of yoga. The rhythm of the cosmic days and nights at both the level of *mahākalpa* (life of Brahmā) and *kalpa* (day in the life of Brahmā) corresponds to the rhythm of Puruṣa's practice of yoga. Through the practice of yoga, Puruṣa emits the world and then re-absorbs it back into himself.[21] The great conflagration at the end of the universe is now "as much an effect of the *tapas* of Śiva as it is a sacrifice."[22]

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[19] See Baumer, p. 15 and Padoux, *Vāc*, p. 232.
[20] Madeline Biardeau, "Purāṇic Cosmogony," in *Mythologies*, ed. Wendy Doniger (Chicago: 1989).
[21] Biardeau, "Purāṇic Cosmogony," p. 821.
[22] Biardeau, "Purāṇic Cosmogony," p. 821.

Especially relevant to AG's worldview is the process of interiorization. In the shift from the Vedic sacrificial world, sacrificial themes became incorporated into yogic themes. In the yogic worldview, consciousness supersedes the external world. Nonetheless the same building blocks already found in Vedic-Upaniṣadic mythology are used: the structures of expansion and contraction, and the link between the microcomsos and macrocosmos are maintained. Similarly, AG appropriates the Vedic-Upaniṣadic structures of expansion and contraction, the link between the microcosmos and the macrocosmos, and the ideas of the cyclical nature of reality; further AG similarly interprets these notions in terms of consciousness.

This can be shown by looking at AG's worldview in more detail. At the top of Abhinavagupta's cosmology is a Godhead with two intertwining aspects. In abstract terms, the Godhead consists of pure Light-Consciousness (*prakāśa*) and Reflexive Awareness (*vimarśa*), the capacity of that Consciousness to turn back on itself.[23] Reflexive Awareness makes

[23] Padoux, *Vāc*, p. 77.

Light-Consciousness alive; Light-Consciousness only exists insofar as it is reflexively aware.[24]

The names given to Reflexive Awareness by AG signal further its dynamic and creative aspects: "Energy" (*śakti*), "Word" (*vāc*), "Vibration" (*spanda*), and "Pulsation" (*sphurattā*).[25] All dynamism and creativity found at any level of the universe then is a reflection of this dynamism essential to the Godhead itself.[26]

The tradition then refers to the Godhead as being in the form of Light wanting to know itself, feel itself, touch itself, and turn back on itself. Further, the manifestation itself may be understood from this God's point of view. God displays itself so that it may see itself and return back to itself. This notion has a precedent of course in that great Upaṇiṣadic Being who all alone wants to get out of himself. Gazing at himself and thinking to himself he becomes many, he procreates. Thus, such is a description of the urge to get out of one's self; and that is accomplished by turning back on one's self. Maheśvarānanda describes the same process as Śiva,

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[24] Padoux, *Vāc*, p. 78.
[25] Padoux, *Vāc*, p. 77.
[26] See here Bettina Baumer's comments in "The Four Spiritual Ways (upāya) in the Kashmir Śaiva Tradition," in *Hindu Spirituality: Postclassical and Modern*, ed. K.R. Sundararajan and Bithika Mukerji (New York: Crossroad Publishing Company, 1997), p. 5.

overflowing with joy, raising his face to take a peek at himself, to gaze at himself. In terms of Śiva alone that urge is simply the urge to come out of one's self and turn back to take a look at oneself. This urge is known as "Śakti," and in particular the "Śakti" or "Power" that is Reflexive Awareness.

That Śiva's power is also Śiva's consort has profound implications: Śiva is not alone. In other words, in terms of both Śiva and Śakti that urge to know the self is the erotic urge to sexually unite with the other. Thus, the intertwining of the two poles that I just described above in abstract terms may be expressed in more concrete terms. More precisely, Light-Consciousness and Reflexive Awareness are Śiva and Śakti in a state of blissful intercourse, always intertwining.

AG in fact playfully brings together both the abstract and concrete terms when he uses a *mṛś* term to describe the precise relationship between Śiva and Śakti: "Śakti would not even think *(āmarśayet)* [of herself] as different from Śiva."[27] To be Śakti or Reflexive Awareness, is to be in dynamic intercourse with Śiva, infusing him with energy, life, and his potent capacity. There is no Śakti that is not in the state of blissful union

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[27] *PTV*, p. 3:
na hi śaktiḥ śivād bhedam āmarśayet/

with Śiva. There is no *vimarśa* that can "*mṛś*" itself into difference; to be *vimarśa* is to intertwine with Śiva, to turn back onto Śiva, to touch Śiva, to gather the totality together again back to the Light-Consciousness that may never be sundered.

It is important to note here that the deep structure of reality for AG is polarity or complementarity. This does not contradict AG's nonduality as the two poles Śiva and Śakti merge in nondual union. In a word, the incessant intertwining of Śiva and Śakti, or more concretely, their sexual intercourse, becomes the great mytheme that guides AG's stance towards the world. This intertwining that takes place at the highest level of reality is never abandoned and trickles down to all levels of reality. The universe arises precisely from the sexual union of Śiva and Śakti. As AG states, Śiva and Śakti blissfully "bang together" and out of that "big bang" the whole universe surges forth. AG writes:

> The doubled form of these two [Śiva and Śakti] is known as "banging together." That very [form] is called "energy of bliss," from which the totality is ejaculated.[28]

The verse is referred to by Padoux, *Vāc*, p. 77; the translation is my own.

[28] *TĀ* 3.68a-68b:
tayoryadyāmalaṃ rūpaṃ sa saṃghaṭṭa iti smṛtaḥ/
ānandaśaktiḥ saivoktā yato viśvaṃ visṛjyate//68//

In union with Śakti, Śiva literally "ejaculates" (*vi-sṛj*) the world.[29] The Sanskrit root *sṛj* used here is a cognate of the English term "surge." The world then is precisely a "surging forth" of Śiva himself. That Śiva puts himself into the world supports AG's nondual metaphysics where it is emphasized that although Consciousness is transcendent to the universe it is always immanent and hence always available. Śiva although transcendent still dwells in all beings; that is, all beings retain their connection to Śiva. In other words, in creating the world, Śiva simply transforms himself in creating the world. As he emits, he puts himself into the emission.

Now in describing the emission of the universe, AG is clearly thinking of the parallels to the emission of semen. Subtle vibration transforms into an uncontrollable pulsation or throbbing. This is in turn leads to the actual act of emitting or shooting forth. What surges forth finally is the semen of Śiva, so that the universe contains the essence of Śiva.

Holding special significance is the reversal of that process, when interpreted on the level of the individual. When the individual, whose

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[29] See Padoux, *Vāc*, pp. 80-81.

body is the cosmos, is able to effect the reversal of the cosmos through transformative practices, he thus becomes liberated. The individual utilizes the very power of Śiva which dwells within him--through spiritual practices, yogic and breathing exercises, *mantra-*, *maṇḍala-*, and *mudrā-* exercises, visionary exercises, and gnoseological exercises--to return to Śiva, to become liberated.

What is most important is that AG's hermeneutics revolves around the key term *vimarśa*. More precisely, the ideas of the cyclical nature of the microcosmos and macrocosmos are subsumed in his notion of emissional power (*visarga*), equated further with reflexive awareness (*vimarśa*). This dynamism of consciousness is twofold. In concrete terms, through his power, Śiva both expands and contracts. In one direction this power gives rise to the manifestation of the universe. In the other direction it is the power of dissolution, which, interpreted at the individual level, becomes liberation. This dynamic aspect of Śiva then at once gives rise to the whole cosmos and, at the same time connects the individual back to God.

That is not all however. The equation of *vimarśa* and *visarga* and the sexual connotations of the term *visarga* suggest the key difference between AG and prior notions of interiorization. For AG, the performance of sexual

union, the highest Trika ritual, is at once a transformation of consciousness, a cosmological process, and a re-enactment of sacrifice. In AG's Trika terminology, it is during the *kula* sacrifice, that the *siddha* and *yoginī* together in union become a *kula,* that is a body of power; through this body the individual accesses, returns to, and relives the primordial body of power, that is, Śakti and Śiva in blissful intercourse. This is quite natural. Insofar as the emission of the universe begins with the "big bang," the dissolution must be nothing less than a return to the same.

Thus, AG differs from prior notions of interiorization. Not only does he interiorize cosmological and sacrificial structures in his model of consciousness, but also for AG the transformation of that consciousness takes place precisely through sexual ritual. Moreover, this key ritual becomes infused into other aspects of AG's worldview. Thus, for AG, consciousness becomes "eroticized" and, in turn, cosmology and sacrifice, insofar as they become reflected in AG's interior model of consciousness, also become "eroticized."

Before coming back to the phonematic recollection, and showing how it relates specifically to the model of sexual union, I want to explore two more terms, "pulsation" and "banging together," both of which are

associated with reflexive awareness, and both of which suggest further that AG has an erotic model in mind when he is discussing consciousness.

Pulsation, AG's Throbbing Heart, AG's Erotic Hermeneutics of Consciousness, Banging Together, Etc.

Pulsation

I have already noted that reflexive awareness is also understood as *sphurattā*. An exploration of this term further reveals the tantric substrate of the term *vimarśa*.

Sphurattā is derived from the root *sphur*, a cognate of which is "spur," as in "spur of the moment," meaning "a sudden or creative impulse."[30] In general, this rich term means "pulsation." However, it has been translated in various ways as scholars attempt to get at some of the nuances implied in this term when used by AG and others. Thus, the term may be translated as "luminous vibrating," (Torella) "phosphorescent throbbing," (White) or "inner throbbing," "reverberating," and "radiating forth" (Isayeva); and all these terms relate to "ecstatic joy," "erotic play," and "wild dancing"

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[30] Lanman, *A Sanskrit Reader*, p. 281. Lanman lists the English "spur," meaning "to goad with the heal," as one of the cognates. This in turn is used idiomatically in the phrase "on the spur of the moment," which is defined as "on a sudden impulse." *American Heritage Dictionary*, s.v.

(Isayeva) (what Heidegger might have had in mind with the notion of "letting go" (*gelassenheit*)). Isayeva reminds us that when we speak of Consciousness we speak of a Consciousness that is at once erotic and poetic. Consciousness is not only of the mind, it is of language, speech, and body.

In arguing that the vocabulary of high Hindu tantra reflects its roots in earlier Tantra, which was based on the transaction of sexual fluids, David White provides a clear example of how the term *sphur-* was used by AG and others: "The absolute flashes forth, throbbing phosphorescently (*sphurattā*; *ullāsā*). It expands as a phosphorescent wave, a welling, a swelling (*sphurad-ūrmi*) . . . ."[31]

The term contains both notions of light and sound. Along with other terms such as *ābhāsa, pratibhā, ullāsa,* the term perhaps refers back to the yogic experiences of light.[32] This might include concrete visions of dazzling luminosity or more subtle forms of illumination and flashes of insight. The term is also one of many terms used in Śaiva cosmogony to convey its

[31] David Gordon White, "Transformations in the Art of Love: Kāmakalā Practices in Hindu Tantric and Kaula Traditions," *History of Religions* 38, no. 2 (November 1998), p. 182.
[32] Muller-Ortega, *Triadic Heart*, p. 96.

dynamism, terms such as *ud-las, ud-śal,* and *pra-ud-mil.*[33] As I have noted, Consciousness is alive, continually pulsating: terms such as "contracting" and "expanding" (*saṃkoca* and *vikāsa*), "opening" and "closing" (*unmeṣa* and *nimeṣa*), "trembling" (*ullasitā*), "throbbing," "waving," and "sparkling" (*ucchalatā*) all, along with *sphur-*, convey such vibration.[34] Regarding sound, the term links to the Spanda notion of the vibrating, pulsating, evolving universe, layered by sound-energies.[35]

In the following passage, AG himself relates the notion of phosphorescing to a variety of other terms, including "vibration" (*spanda*), "surging up" (*ucchalana*), "wave" (*ūrmi*), "essence" (*sāra*), "heart" (*hṛdaya*), and the source of vibration, "motionless motion" (*kiṃciccalana*),[36] the stillpoint where in reality all action takes place:

> In the heart, the Reflexive Awareness of the self, in which the entire universe is dissolved, manifesting in the first and last [moments] of the perceiving of things, has the name "universal;" and [such reflexive awareness] is called "Vibration" in the scriptures, whose nature is a surging up within one's own self.[37]

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[33] Harvey P. Alper, "Siva and the Ubiquity of Consciousness: the Spaciousness of an Artful Yogi." *Journal of Indian Philosophy* 7 (1979): 345-407.
[34] Muller-Ortega, *Triadic Heart*, pp. 82-83.
[35] Harvey P. Alper, "The Cosmos as Siva's Language-Game: 'Mantra' According to Kṣemarāja's *Śivasūtravimarśinī*," in *Understanding Mantras*, ed. Harvey P. Alper (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1989), p. 289, n. 44.
[36] See also Torella, IPK, p. 121, n. 28.
[37] *TĀ* 4.182b-183b:

This Vibration is precisely a motionless motion, as it is the wave of the ocean of intelligence; without such wave, there is no consciousness.

The reality of the ocean is the state of wavelessness, then waves, and so on. This [Vibration] is the essence of the ensemble of everything. The insentient universe has consciousness for its essence, its foundation resting in that [Consciousness]. That Essence is the great heart.[38]

AG's Throbbing Heart

Bearing in mind that AG equates Reflexive Awareness with Pulsation, it is worth dwelling on the meaning of an especially significant verse in which the term Pulsation occurs. This verse, among other things a hymn to Mother and Father, might be said to be AG's most important in that he himself places it at the beginning of not only the *TĀ* but also the *TS* and *PTV*. This verse puts Pulsation in a context that reveals much about what AG is thinking when he uses both this term and the term "Reflexive

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hṛdaye svavimarśo'sau drāvitāśeṣaviśvakaḥ//182//
bhāvagrahādiparyantabhāvī sāmānyasaṃjñakaḥ/
spandaḥ sa kathyate śāstre svātmanyucchalanātmakaḥ//183//
[38] *TĀ* 4.184a-186a:
kiṃciccalanametāvadananyasphuraṇaṃ hi yat/
ūrmireṣā vibodhābdherna saṃvidanayā vinā//184//
nistaraṅgataraṅgādivṛttireva hi sindhutā/
sārametatsamastasya yaccitsāraṃ jaḍaṃ jagat//185//

Awareness." Before attempting to decipher the many levels of meaning pouring out of AG's evocative poetics, I first provide my translation. AG writes:

> Mother [the Generating], full of the ever fresh [and secret] (*abhinava*) Emission that rests in her pure portion!
>
> And Father [the Generator], having a body that is full, his desire [and dazzling beauty] hidden (*gupta*) in the five faces!
>
> My Heart, containing in itself the Emissional Power, the stuff pulsated out from the sexual intercourse of both [Mother and Father], [embodies] the Supreme Clan of the Nectar of Immortality!
>
> May it Vibrate!![39]

In order to ensure that the enterprise of deodorization does not have the last word, I want to belabor a certain point and assume that my translation has not already borne the obvious out. What AG has in mind here is sexual intercourse, between Śiva and Śakti, between his own mother and father, and between every other couple in between, in particular the *siddha* and the *yoginī*.

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tadadhīnapratiṣṭhatvāttatsāraṃ hṛdayaṃ mahat/
[39] PTV, p. 2:
vimalakalāśrayābhinavasṛṣṭimahā jananī
bharitatanuśca pañcamukhaguptarucirjanakaḥ/
tadubhayayāmalasphuritabhāvavisargamayaṃ
hṛdayamanuttarāmṛtakulaṃ mama saṃsphuratāt//1//
I have taken the Sanskrit from Gnoli, PTV, p. 187.

The pure portion clearly refers to the vulva of the *yoginī* whereas desire and dazzling beauty (*ruci*) to the sexual organ of the *siddha,* i.e., that part of the *siddha* through which the "desire" or "urge" manifests.

These connections are evident within the boundaries of the hymn itself. The portion of the female that holds the "emission," or in which the "emission" takes place, must be the vulva (what else could it be?). This is supported further by the fact that this portion is described as "pure". As I note below, the hymn as a whole refers to AG being a *yoginībhū,* someone that arises out a *yoni* that is precisely pure. Now given this reference to the pure *yoni,* it would be natural, even without the erotic emphasis of AG's theology, to find a reference to the male sexual organ also. Such indeed is the case, for immediately following the reference to the vulva is AG's description of a form that is full, embodying or symbolic of desire, and belonging only to the male; this must be none other than the male sexual organ (again what else?). Now this is also said to be hidden in the *pañcamukha;* in addition to meaning "five faces" this may also mean the mouth that is spread out or wide open.[40] Thus, although it may refer to a

[40] See Singh, *Trident of Wisdom: Abhinavagupta* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1989), p. 2, n. 3.

lion (*siṃha*) and in turn to AG's father, Narasiṃhagupta,[41] the implicit reference is to the open vulva.

These connections find further support if we begin to go outside of the immediate text. For example, when we take *pañcamukha* as "five faces" then this term refers to the five faces of Śiva which often cover the *liṅga* when used as an object of worship so that the *liṅga* now "hides" just beneath the surface. I will say more about the five faces below; here my only point is that this reference to the five faces also supports AG's reference to the phallus.

Further, AG's reference to the vulva finds further support in that the pure portion also refers to the sixteenth digit of the moon.[42] One of the senses of "pure" here is that this aspect of the moon is beyond change as explained by Gnoli:

> The movement of the moon continually regenerates the universe. During the dark fortnight, the moon--celestial image of the drink of immortality (*soma, amṛta*)--decreases little by little: it empties itself, that is, of itself, by feeding the totality (the deities, the "ways," the human beings, the sun, the senses, knowable reality, and so on). During the bright fortnight, the moon, in the opposite direction, gradually takes up again within itself that of which it was deprived.

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[41] This is Singh's insight again in *Trident of Wisdom*, p. 2, n. 3.

[42] First noted by Gnoli, PTV, p. 3, n. 1; there he also refers to his n. 30, which I have translated below.

> The moon is constituted of fifteen parts (*kalā*) that continually grow and decrease--one per day--in a revolution without pause. The necessary presupposition of their continuous regeneration, the indefatigable and unalterable substrate (*bhitti*)[43] of this infinite change, the permanent element that assures its continuity and regularity, is the sixteenth part, that, invisible, feeds the universe (*viśvatarpiṇī*). The sixteenth part (*kalā*) of the moon is the power, the energy, the divine emission that incessantly rejuvenates the totality.[44]

Important for us is that this sixteenth digit becomes equated by AG with the sixteenth phoneme, none other than the *visarga*-phoneme and all that symbolizes. Among other things, this phoneme, also called the "love-principle" (*kāmatattva*), becomes equated with emission itself and hence the place in which the emission takes place, which on the human level, is the *yoni*.[45]

This is not to deny references to other levels of reality. In fact, Gnoli has noted several.[46] The ever fresh (*abhinava*) Emission (*sṛṣṭi*) may refer to both AG (I say more about this reference below) as well as "the way, the pure world, beyond illusion." The Emissional Power (*visarga*) may refer to

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[43] It is interesting to note that AG uses a "substrate" or "wall" (*bhitti*) metaphor, which is related in turn to a mirror metaphor, in both his *IPV* and *ABH*: Gerow, "Abhinavagupta's Aesthetics," p. 188, n. 17.

[44] My translation of Gnoli, PTV, p. 15, n. 30.

[45] See Padoux, *Vāc*, pp. 277-286, especially pp. 281-284, on the sexual connotations of the *visarga* phoneme; see White, "Transformations," pp. 176-184, on the symbolism of the *visarga* according to both AG and the *Yoginīhṛdaya*.

both "the true and proper emission" (is Gnoli anesthetizing a reference to "ejaculation" here?) as well as to "the creative force of consciousness, the I." The Clan (*kula*) refers "to the ensemble of the divine powers that constitute the totality, the secret essence of the sacred scriptures." Here we may add everything else the term "Clan" means for AG; in *TĀ* 29 for example AG describes the Clan as not only "superiority," "freedom," "hermeneutical power,"[47] and "consciousness" but also as the "body of the Godhead," "potency," "vitality," "force," and "amassing."[48] The five faces of Śiva are also the sources of the Śaiva revelation according to a system accepted and reinterpreted by AG. Gnoli explains:

> In general, the various scriptures are divided into three groups of ten, eighteen, and sixty-four scriptures, corresponding respectively, to scriptures of duality, of duality-nonduality, and of nonduality, and presided over by Śiva, Rudra, and Bhairava. Each scripture is the result of a particular combination of the five faces of Śiva, i.e., Īśāna, Tatpuruṣa, Sadyojāta, Vāmadeva, and Aghora. These have been described by AG in his two commentaries on the *MVT*.[49]

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[46] What follows is my translation and/or summary of an excerpt from Gnoli, PTV, p. 3, n. 1.

[47] The term used by AG is *sāmarthya*. This is derived from *samartha* which means a word that has force or meaning, a significant word; thus *sāmarthya* is both power and sameness of meaning or signification. Monier-Williams, *A Sanskrit-English Dictionary*.

[48] *TĀ* 29.4a-4b:
kulaṃ ca parameśasya śaktiḥ sāmarthyamūrdhvatā/
svātantryamojo vīryaṃ ca piṇḍaḥ saṃvicchaarīrakam//4//

[49] My translation and summary of an excerpt from Gnoli, PTV, p. 12, n. 24.

In addition, on one level, "Father and Mother"[50] refers to Śiva and Śakti. On another level, AG is making a reference to his own birth and to the tantric union that took place to conceive him. Abhinavagupta himself is a *yoginībhū*, a spiritual offspring arisen from a pure womb; he was conceived in the tantric ritual union of a *yoginī* and a *siddha*, his mother Vimalā and his father Narasiṃhagupta respectively, both in the state of meditative absorption at the time.[51] On one level then this is a reference to his own mother Vimalā, referred to by the phrase "*vimalakalā*," a mother who is "*abhinava*," "always new," and to his own father, a father who is "*gupta*," "concealed." The result of an "*abhinava*"-Mother and a "*gupta*"-Father is Abhinavagupta himself.

Finally, Gnoli suggests that Heart itself may refer to "thought (Reflexive Awareness), consciousness itself, the foundation of all things."

What Gnoli does not suggest is the sexual connotation of the Heart itself. This must refer to nothing less than Abhinavagupta's sexual organ. That the Heart, whatever it may be, is in fact Abhinavagupta's Heart is

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[50] See also David Gordon White, *The Alchemical Body: Siddha Traditions in Medieval India* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1994), for a discussion of "father and mother."
[51] See Lillian Silburn, *Kuṇḍalinī: The Energy of the Depths* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1988), pp. 174-175. Abhinavagupta provides some details of his life in *TĀ* 37; part of this is summarized by Ingalls, *Dhvanyāloka*, p. 30.

clearly supported by the Sanskrit; AG here uses the term *mama*, the first person genitive singular pronoun. That the Heart is the sexual organ is again supported not only by the hymn itself but also by references outside this immediate text. In fact, in addition to using the term to refer to *liṅga*, AG also uses the term to refer to *yoni*, and to both in union, and by extension, the place where union takes place, the place where sexual fluids mingle.[52]

AG's Erotic Hermeneutics of Consciousness

What are the implications of the above discussion? What I have shown is that the terms AG uses to discuss Reflexive Consciousness are terms with obvious sexual referents. More precisely, they refer to the sexual ritual central to the Kaula lineage, in which initiation and liberation occur via the transmission of sexual fluids. Thus, that AG uses metaphors arising out of this context reveals what AG really thinks about Consciousness-Pulsation.

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52 I discuss the heart again in the next two chapters; for now I note the various references to sexual connotations of this term found in Muller-Ortega, *Triadic Heart*, pp. 110-111, and 111-116.

This is not to deny that AG is talking about consciousness. However, it would be wrong to simply stop at saying AG's terms refer to sexual intercourse on one level and to consciousness on another level. It is more accurate to say that the meanings feed off of each other. Ignoring this, academic representations of Abhinavagupta's life and work become lifeless. What I am saying is that AG's model of Consciousness, and in particular his understanding of Reflexive Consciousness, has a tantric grounding.

Having said that, the gist of what he is really saying, the sexual substance giving life to AG's language, needs to be retrieved. In a word, Consciousness for Abhinavagupta is spermatic.[53] By that I mean that for AG Consciousness, like sperm, is or carries the stuff of life and, further, it is able to transmit the stuff of life from one to another. Pandey suggests this when he writes:

> The Kula system, in its explanation of the manifestation of the letters from 'A' to 'H' seems to have been influenced by the analogy of the sex-union (Caryākrama). For, there are repeated references to it in this context. The conception of Anuttara, which is represented in the alphabetical system by the first letter 'A', well illustrates the point in hand. We know that the birth of a child is due, neither to the male

[53] This is not as unusual as it sounds; the doctrine of "Spermatikos Logos" arises in various places, ancient and modern. On disciples of Thomas Pynchon characterizing his understanding of Language [and hence Consciousness] as such: see Larry Daw and A. Ruch, *Spermatikos Logos* (1 Oct. 1999, 18 Jul. 2000), <www.rpg.net/quail/libyrinth/pynchon/pynchon.intro.html>.

> nor the female alone, but to the union of the two and consequent harmonious mixture of semen (Vīrya) of the male and menstrual discharge (Rajas) of the female, so that the two lose their separate entity as we can see in the yolk of peacock's egg. Accordingly the Kaulism holds that the Ultimate Principle, which manifests every thing, is not pure unity but unity of Anuttara and Anuttarā, represented by 'A' in which the two lose themselves in each other exactly as the two Akāras merge in each other when they are united.... It asserts that to admit the creation from a single principle or even two independent principles, existing in separation from each other, is against the fact of experience.[54]

Like sperm fertilizing the womb, transmitting life, by way of two into the heart of one offspring, this Primordial Pulsation, may be transmitted from one to another, and, in particular, from Śiva-Bhairava to conscious beings.

Pulsation takes the practitioner back to the "big bang" (*saṃghaṭṭa*) itself, the primordial moment of Śiva and Śakti, Mother and Father, in pulsating union. Reflecting on his own state of being, Abhinavagupta envisions his Heart-Consciousness as arising out of Pulsation and thus still bearing that power. In tune with his Heart, emulating the great *ṛṣis*, Abhinavagupta becomes a human tuning-fork,[55] and allows his Heart to vibrate so that he is transmitted to the past, or rather, so that the past becomes present once again in his own Consciousness. The transmission of

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[54] Pandey, *Abhinavagupta*, p. 653.
[55] I am borrowing this metaphor from David Gordon White.

Consciousness takes place precisely in the same way that sexual fluids are transmitted, allowing one to flow back to the primordial source where it all begins, the big bang.

Big Bang

Throughout TĀ 3, AG uses the term *saṃghaṭṭa,* literally, "rubbing or clashing together," "friction," "collision," or "union." I have translated the term as "banging together" to emphasize the sexual connotations of the term: with each usage of the term AG wants to evoke the image of sexual intercourse. Such translation also brings out the fact that the "banging" that takes place on the human level is a reflection of the "big bang" that takes place on the cosmic level. Previous translations of this term, such as "unifying friction" by Silburn[56] and Padoux,[57] and "embrace" by Muller-Ortega,[58] have produced an unfair bias in the reading of AG, perpetuating a high hermeneutics agenda set in motion by JR and other readers of AG but not necessarily AG. Thus, I purposely attempt to bring out the sexual connotations by always translating this term with the phrase "banging

[56] See for example Silburn, *Kuṇḍalinī*, p. 169.
[57] See for example Padoux, *Vāc*, p. 244.

together." Although perhaps inelegant, the term nonetheless retrieves the raw energy that motivates AG's work that is otherwise lost.

At the same time, this is not to deny that the term operates on several levels. My point however is that while the meaning exists on both grammatical and metaphysical registers it always retains its connotation at the sexual level. Further, by retaining this sexual connotation the term becomes fully charged, i.e., the sexual connotation gives new meaning to the term on the grammatical and metaphysical levels.

The term is related to the term *saṃghaṭa* of which various derivatives have grammatical connotations. For example, *saṃghaṭaka* is used to explain *saṃdhi* and *saṃghaṭanā* refers to the "combination of words or sounds." AG is clearly playing with the term, its connections to terms of grammar serving him well: on the surface AG is giving a discourse on grammar; on a deeper level, AG is again referring back to the sexual ritual.

That AG uses the term with the connotation of sexual intercourse may be substantiated with a couple examples from other parts of his writings. It is highly significant that this is the same term AG uses in *TĀ* 29 (discussed in my fourth chapter) to refer to sexual intercourse in the context

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[58] See for example Muller-Ortega, *Triadic Heart*, p. 82.

of the sexual union ritual, the *kulayāga*. The term in fact is one of several terms that refer to sexual intercourse. Other terms include: "emissional banging together" or "ejaculatory banging together" (*visargasaṃghaṭṭa*); "uniting," "doubling," or "yoking" (*yāmala, yugala, yuganaddha*); and "mingling" (*melāpa, melaka*) or "mingling position" (*lolībhāva*).[59]

His use of similar language in *TĀ* 3 signals the Kaula background of his thoughts. For example, at *TĀ* 3.68a-68b, it is precisely to the doubling or twinned (*yāmala*) form of Śiva and Śakti that AG gives the name "banging together." The term *yāmala* itself goes back to the pair Yama and Yamī, the first couple and thus the father and mother of humankind; and while some vedic sages perhaps rejected the cosmology that begins with a big bang,[60] their speculations on such a possibility clears a space for AG to reclaim this conception in his thoroughly tantric plan of a generative ultimate reality, always polar and at once fertile and virile.

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[59] See Gavin D. Flood, *Body and Cosmology in Kashmir Śaivism* (San Francisco: Mellen Research University Press, 1993), pp. 288-289; on *saṃghaṭṭa* and *yāmala* for example see *TĀ* 29.115b-117. *Rudrayāmala* is the term Maheśvarānanda uses to refer to the intertwining of *prakāśa* and *vimarśa*: Pandey, *Abhinavagupta*, p. 282. For more on *yāmala, rudrayāmala* as well as their connection to *vimarśa* see Muller-Ortega, *Triadic Heart*, pp. 110-111.
[60] See Wendy Doniger O'Flaherty, trans., *The Rig Veda: An Anthology* (Middlesex, England: Penguin Books, 1981), p. 247-250.

Further, at *TĀ* 3.234a-236b, AG refers to the union of Lady Black Hole and Bhairava as the "doubling" (*yāmala*) state. Finally, at TĀ 3.107b-108c, AG refers to the pulsating and throbbing trident as the source of energies that have "mingled together" (*lolībhūtam*).

I also note that in *TĀ* 4, AG describes the Mass of Sounds as the matrix in which sounds mingle together; and in *TĀ* 35 the whole process of revelation is modeled on the Kaula ritual as he refers to it as "the mingling of revelation." I will return to this in my fifth chapter.

His term of choice to discuss union however is *saṃghaṭṭa* and again it is clear that AG is thinking of sexual intercourse. I have already pointed out that the doubling of Śiva and Śakti is called "banging together" at TĀ 3.68a-68b. It is significant that reflexive awareness, and, along with that, the whole totality, arises within this banging together.[61] This is further described later at *TĀ* 3.188b-190a when AG refers to the two poles of ultimate reality as the "reflexive knower" and the "reflexively known," whose mutual attraction and banging together gives rise to joy and bliss.

His association of "banging together" and "bliss" in both of these references is consistent with the Kaula notion that reality in the form of

bliss *(ānanda)* becomes embodied during sexual intercourse.[62] As I have already pointed out in my introduction, for AG there is no difference between experiencing the bliss or blessedness of God and bliss in the body; the implication is that Consciousness is always embodied. There is no such thing for AG as a merely cognitive experience of God.[63]

At TĀ 3.93b-94a the banging together of, on the one hand, the Absolute Supreme Vibration (the phoneme *A*) and Bliss (the phoneme *Ā*) and, on the other hand, Will (the phoneme *I*) and Expansion (the phoneme *U*) give rise to diversity. At *TĀ* 398b-104a, the banging together of the energies within the natural self give rise to more variety and to the "wonderful appearance of the energy of action." At *TĀ* 3.198a-200a, Śakti in the form of the Creative Sonic Mother bangs together with Bhairava in the form of the Mass of Sounds, transforming herself in the process into the Phonematic Garland, also known as the "Open Vulva." At *TĀ* 3.211a-214b, AG discusses the threefold emission or ejaculation. Significantly, in *TĀ* 29 the threefold emission refers to male sexual emissions, female sexual

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61 *TĀ* 3.71b-72a.

62 See Pandey, ***Abhinavagupta***, p. 620.

63 These ideas follow directly from Pandey's interpretation of Madhurāja's poem (discussed in my first chapter).

emissions, and the union of the two. AG is consistent in his discussion, as he describes the third aspect of the threefold emission at *TĀ* 3.211a-214b as also arising out of a banging together, in particular "the banging together of objects in a state of raising the face [or pre-cognitive impulse]."[64]

In addition, that he is referring back to the sexual ritual seems to be betrayed further by AG's own references used for support. AG cites a discussion, found in the *Way of Guarding Reality*, of the threefold emission, of which the first is described as "the banging together of two dwelling together in the middle space of the calyx of the lotus of the heart."[65] AG even cites the *Aitareyāṇyaka* which describes the universe being formed out of a big bang, the sole purpose of which is to allow the intermingling of female and male sexual fluids, referred to as "red" and "vitality" respectively.[66]

I close here with AG's commentary on the *Supreme Triadic Queen*, or to be consistent with AG's remarks here, the *Supreme Vulva Queen*:

> In the doubling (*yāmala*) or sexual-hero-and-*yoginī* tradition, there is the banging together (*saṃghaṭṭa*) between the sexual hero (*vīra*) and the *yoginī*. The purpose is only to stimulate the eternal bliss by

[64] *TĀ* 3.211a-214b.
[65] *TĀ* 3.215a-219b.
[66] *TĀ* 3.226a-231b.

> means of the touching of sex-organs. By this touching, there is the "shaken" emission. It gives intense delight. In a single person (*ekavīratāyāmapi*) there occurs also, by concentration of the mind on the essential delight of the Self, the same (sexual) delight. In the case of the ordinary run of humankind, on the occasion of sexual intercourse, on account of the close compactness of the union of the sexual organs of the man and the woman right from the deepest part up to the foremost part, the minds of both are dissolved (in the supreme Śakti), and the delight that resides in the ejaculatory part of the sexual organ of man and the nether aspect of the triangular region, i.e., the *yoni* or the female sexual organ, is generated to an exceedingly high degree.[67]

Phonematic Recollection[68]

As I have pointed out, AG in fact takes the Śambhu way to be the reflexive awareness of the set of the fifty Sanskrit phonemes. In light of the above discussion then, we would expect the phonematic recollection to also have an erotico-mystical substrate.

I will first describe this process in general to show that the phonematic recollection may be understood strictly in terms of consciousness and language, in a way this is consistent with AG's abstract understanding of the Śambhu way.

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[67] AG, PTV, pp. 222-223 (the Sanskrit may be found in Gnoli, PTV, p. 262): translated by Jaideva Singh, *A Trident of Wisdom: Abhinavagupta* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1989), p. 206 (I have made several modifications).

Phonemetic Recollection in Terms of Consciousness and Language

The adept, allowing consciousness to spontaneously and naturally recollect itself or turn back on itself or touch itself, seizes in one fell swoop, the complete matrix of sounds,[69] i.e., spontaneously becomes in touch with all of reality, attaining a state of nonduality (*nirvikalpa*). This is the state of prediscursive impulse in which Light and Reflexive Awareness intertwine.[70]

This act of recollection is salvific precisely because it is the interior reversal of the act of the manifestation of the universe by Śiva.[71] Here the emission of the universe by Śiva is understood as precisely the articulation of the fifty phonemes, correlated in turn to the collection of the categories of reality (*tattvas*). Insofar as the totality of the fifty phonemes are represented by the first phoneme *A* and the last phoneme *HA* which, in joining together with the *bindu Ṃ*, spell out *AHAṂ* or "I," the fifty phonemes are an embodiment of the absolute self and thus in emitting or enunciating the universe, Śiva at once puts himself into it.

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[68] See also my exposition of "Mass of Sounds, Creative Sonic Mother, and Phonematic Garland" below.
[69] Baumer, "Four Spiritual Ways," p. 16.
[70] See Sanderson, Śaivism and the Tantric Traditions," p. 695.

Important now for our understanding of reflexive awareness is that Śiva's enunciation of the phonemes is referred to as Śiva's reflexive awareness (*parāmarśa*); in other words, his act of recollection leads from the absolute to the totality.

Theoretically, each *parāmarśa* giving rise to a new phoneme or aspect of reality may be interpreted as Śiva turning back on himself. However, in light of AG's connection of *parāmarśa* with *saṃghaṭṭa*, as I have discussed above, it is more accurate to say that each new reality arises from Śiva and Śakti in union.

Understood at the human level, the act of recollection leads from the totality to the absolute. In other words, the practitioner gathers together all the aspects of Śiva dispersed into the world of *māyā* and makes them whole again, uniting them in the absolute self.

AG is also thinking of language here and the power of primordial language: Śiva is the master of words, the poet who puts his consciousness into his work, a consciousness that may be tapped into by the person-with-heart. Elsewhere, AG describes the process of accessing deeper levels of reality and consciousness through language:

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[71] This and the next paragraph follow Baumer, "Four Spiritual Ways," p. 16.

> The more this uncreated overflowing reality is seen clearly, the more wonder unfolds. The various levels in which creative intuition follows from conventional language being immersed in what precedes it, and that in the primordial, transcendental [beyond *māyā*] phonemes. Those who repose in this creative intuition, overflowing with the primordial phonemes, become poetic and linguistic adepts. Resting in this consciousness-reality in its highest form, unlimited by conventional language, what would they not [be able to] know [and] what would they not [be able to do] do?[72]

The practitioner returning to this primordial level of language is able to experience wonder just as the Absolute itself, reflecting on its own freedom, experiences amazement, also equated with God's creative urge or impulse, its energy of will or desire (*icchāśakti*).[73] Again, the way of Śambhu is precisely the way of Creative Impulse. Returning to the Creative Impulse and amazed by his own creativity, the *tāntrika* experiences reality in the same manner as Śiva. The practitioner attains "Siva-Vision," not a vision of some Śiva "out there," but the vision to see things the way Śiva does.

Thus, for AG, one way of understanding the phonematic recollection is in terms of consciousness and language.

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[72] *TĀ* 11.76-79: my translation of Gnoli's translation. See Priyawat Kuanpoonpol's discussion of this with reference to *pratibhā* in "*Pratibhā*: The Concept of Intuition in the Philosophy of Abhinavagupta" (Ph.D diss., Harvard University, 1991), pp. 257-258.
[73] *TS* 1, p. 6: taccamatkāra icchāśaktiḥ: noted by Padoux, *Vāc*, p. 247.

Phonematic Recollection as Sacrifice

AG is also thinking of such recollection as a type of sacrifice. The practitioner sacrifices the whole world by recognizing its connection to Śiva. Each aspect is "resurrected" again as it is joined back to Śiva.[74] AG says that each aspect becomes resurrected by this act of recollection and thus becomes spiritually meaningful.

Here, I note that this reading is consistent with AG's use of *visarga* to describe both the surging forth of Śiva and the surging back, re-surging, or re-surrecting (also a cognate of *sṛj*). In the *ŚSV*, KR also describes a twofold reflexive awareness paralleling a twofold emission:

> the two *bindus* forming the *visarga* correspond to a double emission, inward and outward, resulting from two self-awarnesses, one internal (*antarvimarśa*) revealing the universe as resting in the absolute, the other external (*bahirvimarśa*), producing the five groups of consonants . . . and the *tattvas*. . . ."[75]

Now to recognize all phonemes as identical to Śiva is to recognize all words and meanings, i.e., the world of objectivity, that arise precisely out of a grammatical source, here personified as the Creative Sonic Mother, as also

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[74] This paragraph follows Baumer, "Four Spiritual Ways," p. 16.

[75] *ŚSV* 2.7, p. 62: translated by Padoux in *Vāc*, p. 280.

equivalent to Śiva, being Śiva's embodiment.[76] The consciousness of the practitioner rises again and rejoins Absolute Consciousness just as all letters, words, and meanings rise again and rejoin their source, the *AHAṂ*.

Phonematic Recollection as the Banging Together of Śiva and Śakti

However, the phonematic recollection may be understood in still other terms, in particular as a return to the primordial moment of the "banging together" of Śiva and Śakti.

I want to first note that the Kaula context is reflected in AG's language. In particular, AG refers to Śiva, who transcends the universe, as *akula*; and he refers to Śakti, who is embodied in the universe and is the emission itself, as *kula*. Thus AG writes:

> Abounding in the unfolding of the Clan (*kula*) of this God who is the Absolute Body (*akula*) [the Clan of the Phoneme *A* = *Anuttara*], She is the Supreme, the Energy of the Clan (*kaulikī śakti*), with which the Lord is inseparable.[77]

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[76] This paragraph follows Baumer, "Four Spiritual Ways," p. 16.

[77] *TĀ* 3.67a-67b:
akulasyāsya devasyakulaprathanaśālini/
kauliki sā parā śaktiraviyukto yayā prabhuḥ//67//

> The Absolute [the phoneme *A* = *Anuttara*], the supreme abode, that precisely is called the "Absolute Body" (*akula*) [the Clan of the Phoneme *A* = *Anuttara*]; the emission of the Lord is called the "Energy of the Clan."[78]

AG retains the root meanings of the terms *kula*, *akula* and *kaulikī*, all of which arise out of the Kaula tradition. Regarding the etymologies, as Sanderson has described, in the *yoginī* tradition, also called the "kula tradition" or the "cremation grounds tradition," *kula* refers to the clans of *yoginīs* and mothers.[79] *Kaulika* is derived from this term to refer to the religious performances of the *yoginī* tradition in which clans of *yoginīs* are propitiated or to the powers appropriated through such worship, especially the power of become a part of the clan. In the Kaula tradition that evolves out of these mother cults the *kula* terminology also evolves, being reinterpreted while still being charged with its original meanings. Here *kula* also means "body" and in particular the cosmic body which is the universe or the body of power (*śakti*), embodied in the eight clans of mothers. One could enter the totality of the eight clans of mothers, the cosmic body of power, by penetrating into just one part of this cosmic body

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[78] *TĀ* 3.143a-143b:
anuttaraṃ paraṃ dhāma tadevākulamucyate/
visargastasya nāthasya kaulikī śaktirucyate//143//

or totality, that is, by becoming a part of the one of eight clans to which one was specially connected.

Now AG both appropriates and transcends these various meanings. I have already noted various meanings above. What is most important for AG and what again grounds AG in the Kaula tradition is that it refers to the whole collection of the powers of God making up the universe.[80] Further, it refers to any finite manifestation of God, still containing the infinite in being an embodiment of God, and, thus, being a source of return back to the infinite.[81] For AG then each finite part is a self-contained universe in itself, the universe in one "body" or one "clan." Further, true to his Kaula roots, it is through any one part, any microcosmos, that one gains access to the Absolute Clan, the macrocosmos. The most potent *kula* of course is the body of union (*yāmalarūpa*), the clan of two, the one body of *siddha* and *yoginī* together. This is also the most authentic and natural representation of reality, which, as we have seen, at its highest level consists of Śiva and

[79] Here and in the rest of the paragraph I am following Sanderson, Śaivism and the Tantric Traditions," p. 679.
[80] Gnoli, PTV, p. 3, n. 1.
[81] See Muller-Ortega, *Triadic Heart*, p. 59.

Śakti in union.[82] In the ritual of the *kula* sacrifice then, the couple in union becomes a *kula,* a body of power, through which one returns to, and relives the primordial body of power, that is, Śakti and Śiva in blissful intercourse.

It appears that AG had this model in mind in his exposition of the phonematic recollection. In particular, the phonematic recollection may be understood as a return to the primordial moment of sexual union. This is consistent with and supported by AG's Recognition worldview. Insofar as Śiva is equated with *Prakāśa* and Śakti is equated with *Vimarśa,* then recollection must also be understood in terms of the union of Śiva and Śakti.

Further, that the phonematic recollection is a reversal of the emission also implies that such recollection, insofar as it is a return to the source, must in some way re-enact the primordial sexual union of Śiva and Śakti. This is further supported by the fact that in phonematic terms the source is the phoneme *A,* equated with the Ultimate (*anuttara*). In the context of the primordial sacrifice discussed in *TĀ* 29, that is, the ritual of sexual union,

[82] Muller-Ortega, *Triadic Heart,* p. 110.

AG describes *anuttara* as the a religious experience in which the union of Śiva and Śakti is directly realized.[83]

Also of significance is that AG refers to the secret of liberation as the "*kaulika* power in the heart" which he further equates with the emissional or ejaculatory power.[84] Thus, for AG, the power that is appropriated through *yoginī* rituals becomes the key element in his system, the power that gives rise to both manifestation and liberation, and is equated with reflexive awareness.

Finally, we recall that the set of phonemes is also identified with Śakti in the form of the Creative Sonic Mother (*mātṛkā*). AG envisions Sakti in the form of the Creative Sonic Mother in union with Śiva in the form of the Mass of Sounds; together they thus form the two intertwining aspects of reality at its highest level. These two contain all fifty phonemes, making up the ground of all words and meanings and hence of all reality. In erotic terminology AG envisions the two in sexual union giving rise to the birth of the universe. Thus, he writes:

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[83] Pandey, *Abhinavagupta*, p. 643.
[84] See Muller-Ortega, *Triadic Heart*, p. 107.

> And this [Creative Sonic Mother], by banging together with the Mass of Sounds, [becomes] the Phonematic Garland (*mālinī*), whose vulva is open (*bhinnayoni*).[85]

AG tells us also that the Creative Sonic Mother contains the universe in a potential state just like an expectant mother.[86]

Now I began my discussion of the phonematic recollection noting that liberation, when consciousness or language terminology is used, is the "touching" or "seizing" (*parāmarśa*) in one fell swoop of the fifty phonemes or the complete matrix of sounds. The sexual substrate should now be obvious. Touching is more than the mere recognition by a consciousness without a body; and the matrix is more than the merely metaphysical ground of being. Liberation for AG, achieved through the phonematic recollection which is understood abstractly as the *parāmarśa* of the fifty phonemes, is precisely the "seizing," "stroking," or "laying hold of" the Creative Sonic Mother (*mātṛkā*). This in turn reflects the laying hold of the Goddess of the Kula, re-enacting the sexual union of the Lord and the

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[85] *TĀ* 3.198a-200a:
ekāmarśasvabhāvatve śabdarāśiḥ sa bhairavaḥ/
āmṛśyacchāyayā yogāt saiva śaktiś ca mātṛkā//198
sā śabdarāśisaṃghaṭṭād bhinnayonis tu mālinī/
prāgvannavatayāmarśātpṛthaggvargasvarūpiṇī//199//
ekaikāmarśarūḍhau tu saiva pañcāśadātmikā/
[86] *TĀ* 15.130b-131a: translated by Dyczkowski in *Aphorisms*, p. 21.

Goddess of the Kula, by way of penetrating one of the eight Mothers and thus penetrating the center, the Lady Kula. In various ways then the phonematic recollection returns one to the primordial moment of sexual union of the Lord and Goddess of the Kula.

Expositions of Selected Verses

The Rising of the Vowels (*TĀ* 3.65a-148a)

Here I discuss one set of verses (71b-77b) that are part of AG's discussion of the "rising of the vowels." This discussion of the vowels is one part of a larger section entitled "the rising of the reflexive awarenesses." In AG's hermeneutics of consciousness, each vowel is a particular aspect of Consciousness that arises through an act of reflexive awareness on the part of Śiva.

The Energies of Will and Unfolding (verses 71b-77b) [87]

At 71b-72a AG states that Reflexive Awareness arises out of the "banging together." The precise term AG uses here for Reflexive Awareness

is *pratyavamarśana*. This may be thought of as different from *vimarśa* insofar as it arises out of *prakāśa* and *vimarśa*, that is, the prior banging together of Śiva and Śakti, understood as *prakāśa* and *vimarśa*. At the same time, this *pratyavamarśa* may be understood as embodying the primordial *vimarśa*. This Reflexive Awareness is also equated here with the Power of Desire. These verses are especially revealing in that AG clearly refers back here to the Yoginī cult, suggesting that AG's hermeneutics of consciousness is ultimately grounded in that cult.

At 73b-77a, AG refers back to his previous usage of Reflexive Awareness at 71b-72a; the implications are: (1) again, Reflexive Awareness (*pratyavamarśa*) always contains the primordial Reflexive Awareness (*vimarśa*); and (2) it is able to be transmitted. These verses also suggest that AG's hermeneutics is grounded in the Yoginī cult.

AG has previously presented the phonemes *A* and *Ā*, which represent respectively the energies of ultimate consciousness (*anuttara*) and bliss (*ānan*da). In the following verses he presents the phonemes *I*, Ī, *U*, and

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[87] References to *mṛś* terms: Abhinavagupta, 3.72b: *pratyavamarśana*; 3.73b: *pratyavamarśa*; Jayaratha, p. 435, l. 12: *parāmarśa*; p. 437, l. 16: *vimṛśya*; l. 17, *parāmarśa*; p. 440, l. 5: *vimarśa*; l. 6: *parāmarśa*; l. 7: *parāmarśa*.

Ū, representing respectively the energies of Will (*icchā*), the Sovereigness (*īśitrī*), Unfolding (*unmeṣa*), and Decrease (*ūnatā*):

> [Arising of the Phoneme *I*:] In the banging together (*saṃghaṭṭa*), its nature being consciousness (*cit*), reflexive awareness (*pratyavamarśana*) (arises); [this is] the Power of Desire (*icchāśakti*); among the Benign (*aghorā*) Powers, She is the Supreme Goddess (*parā*), the Ruler (*prabhu*).[88]
>
> [Arising of the Phoneme *Ī*:] If that [energy of will] has a disturbed form, the Sovereigness (*īśitrī*) [the phoneme *Ī*] arises; then the supreme Terrible goddesses are born, guides on the path of Śiva.[89]
>
> [Arising of the Phoneme *U*:] The reflexive awareness (*pratyavamarśa*) of the own-self (*svātma*) which was produced previously, the solitary (*ekavīraka*), abides as the Unfolding (*unmeṣa*) of the universe of the objects of knowledge, due to the state of the energy of knowledge. This is the Supreme-Nonsupreme Goddess (*parā-aparā*), who continuously emits the Terrible (*ghorā*) circle of mothers, the solitary light of the pure-impure path.
>
> [Arising of the Phoneme *Ū*:] When the knowable part, Unfolding, begins to tremble, then, from the preponderance [of this trembling], the manifestation of Deficiency arises within the state of pure consciousness. The developed [manifestation of the Deficiency] is understood as the beginning of the abiding of the knowable

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[88] *TĀ* 3.71b-72a:
saṃghaṭṭe 'smiñcidātmatvād yattatpratyavamarśanam//71//
icchāśaktir aghorāṇāṃ śaktīnāṃ sā parā prabhuḥ/
See Padoux's discussion of the energy of will in *Vāc*, pp. 246-8; he gives a translation of this verse on p. 247, at n. 64; see also Dyczkowski, *Doctrine*, pp. 41 (at n. 41) and 113 (at n. 111); and Pandey, *Abhinavagupta*, p. 655. These various expositions have influenced my own translations and interpretations here.

[89] *TĀ* 3.72b-73a:
saiva prakṣubdharūpā cedīśitrī saṃprajāyate//72//
tadā ghorāḥ parā devyo jātāḥ śaivādhvadaiśikāḥ/

> category. This development is the assuming of a variety of forms by the ocean of intelligence. The yogins then perceive this [6th vowel] as the seed of the composition of difference.[90]

The energy of will appears in two forms, unagitated and agitated, corresponding respectively to the phonemes *I* and *Ī*. Similarly, the energy of knowledge appears in both unagitated and agitated forms, corresponding respectively to the phonemes *U* and *Ū*.[91]

Abhinavagupta's verses are referring back to the *Tantra of the Garlanded Goddess* (*Mālinī-vijayottara-tantra*) (*MVT*),[92] one of the

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[90] *TĀ*, 3.73b-77b:
svātmapratyavamarśo yaḥ prāg abhūdekavīrakaḥ//73//
jñātavyaviśvonmeṣātmā jñānaśaktitayā sthitaḥ/
iyaṃ parāparā devī ghorām yā mātṛmaṇḍalīm//74//
sṛjaty aviratam śuddhāśuddhamārgaikadīpikām/
jñeyāṃśaḥ pronmiṣan kṣobham yadaiti balavattvataḥ//75//
ūnatābhāsanaṃ saṃvinmātratve jāyate tadā/
rūḍhaṃ tajjñeyavargasya sthitiprārambha ucyate//76//
rūḍhireṣā vibodhābdheścitrākāraparigrahaḥ/
idaṃ tadbhedasaṃdarbhabījaṃ cinvanti yoginaḥ//77//
I am reading *tadbheda-* for *tadbīja-* following Jayararatha's reading; this is first noted by Gnoli.
Padoux translates verses 73b-74a, in *Vāc*, p. 250, n. 73; 74b-75a, p. 251, n. 76; 75b-76a, p. 251, n. 79; 76b-77b, pp. 252-253 (at n. 83); he also refers to JR's commentary on these verses in *Vāc*, p. 250 (at n. 74), p. 251 (at n. 76), pp. 251-252 (at n. 80), p. 253, n. 84, and p. 253 (at n. 85). Pandey refers to verses 73b-74a in *Abhinavagupta*, p. 655; and Dyczkowski refers to 74b-75a in *Doctrine*, p. 114 (at n. 117).

[91] *TĀV*, comm. on 3.73b-74a, p. 437.

[92] AG and JR refer, either explicitly or implicitly, to *MVT* III, 30-33; these verses have been summarized by Sanderson. See my note below.

representative texts of Trika Śaivism.[93] Sanderson has noted that the *MVT* appropriated and reinterpreted an earlier threefold division, that of the three classes of Mothers, deriving from the Trika Yoginī cult.[94] The *MVT* then presents the divisions in more abstract terms, in particular as aspects of the powers of Śiva. These three Goddesses were reinterpreted again in the *JYT* and then again by AG. This process is summarized as follows:

(1) three classes of Mothers according to *MVT*
aghorā/parā
ghorā/parāparā
ghoratarā/aparā

(2) three great powers of Śiva according to *JYT*
icchā (prediscursive impulse which precedes all cognition and action)
jñāna (cogniton)
kriyā (action)

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[93] See Dyczkowski, *Doctrine*, p. 113 and p. 247, note 111; in the note Dyczkowski also points out that the passage is also cited by Kṣemarāja in the *SpN*. It should also be noted that KR again cites this in *SpS*; for a translation of passage and KR's commentary in the *SpS*, see Dyczkowski, *Stanzas*, p. 70. See also Alexis Sanderson, "The Visualization of the Deities of the Trika," in *L'Image Divine, Culte et Méditation dans l'Hindouisme*, ed. A. Padoux (Paris: Centre National de la Recherche Scientifique, 1990), pp. 55-6.

[94] The information here and in the summary table below is taken from Sanderson, "Visualization," pp. 55-56. Sanderson summarizes *MVT* III, 30-33: "The three classes of Śiva's Powers . . . are defined as (i) those which liberate souls (*aghorāḥ*), (ii) those which hold souls where they are, preventing them from progressing towards liberation by causing them to cling to the fruits of their actions (*ghorāḥ/parāparāḥ*), and (iii) those which immerse souls in sensuality, drawing them downwards to ever lower levels of existence (*ghoratarāḥ/aparāḥ*)." Sanderson also notes that the *JYT* had already identified Parā, Parāparā, and Aparā with *icchā*, *jñāna*, and *kriyā*, respectively. On the dating of *JYT* as prior to AG, see Dyczkowski, *Canon*, p. 38. For a general overview of the contents of the *JYT*, see Sanderson, "Śaivism and the Tantric Traditions," pp. 674-677.

(3) another metaphysical triad according to *JYT*
Śiva
Power (Śakti)
individualized consciousness (*nara, aṇu*)

(4) other metaphysical triads according to Abhinavagupta

(a)
emission (*sṛṣṭi*)
maintenance of the emitted (*sthiti*)
resorption (*saṃhāra*)

(b)
agent of cognition (*pramātṛ*)
medium of cognition (*pramāṇa*)
object of cognition (*prameya*)

(c)
nonduality (*abheda / advaita*)
duality-cum-nonduality (*bhedābheda / dvaitādvaita*)
duality (*bheda / dvaita*)

AG elaborates on this inherited scheme. Thus, he identifies the Energies of Will and Unfolding with Parā, the Supreme Goddess of Trika, and Parā-Aparā, the Supreme-Nonsupreme Goddess of Trika, respectively. Further, he describes Parā as being at the center of the *aghorā* powers, and Parā-Aparā as being at the center of the *ghorā* powers.

JR's commentary is especially telling, betraying further the fact that Abhinavagupta's hermeneutics of consciousness ultimately goes back to the Yoginī cult. While JR often interprets AG's text in terms of Recognition

philosophy, he does not stop there. First, JR also refers back to the *MVT*. He describes the *aghorā* energies as those that give rise to liberation;[95] and he quotes an excerpt which describes the *ghorā* energies as those that produce attachment to the fruits of action and obstruct the path to liberation.[96] Further, he glosses the term "reflexive awareness (*pratyavamarśana*)" used by Abhinavagupta as "the reflexive awareness (*parāmarśa*) of the supreme cognizer (*parapramātṛ*). Although the term "cognizer (*pramātṛ*)" is used by Utpaladeva in his Recognition texts,[97] here Jayaratha gives it a double meaning, referring back to the Mothers (*mātṛ*). In other words, Reflexive Awareness, ruling over (*prabhu*) the Mothers (*mātṛ*) becomes the Great Mother (*pramātṛ*) which is the Cognizer or Knowing Subject (*pramātṛ*). Jayaratha plays further with the notion of "mother" when he says that the Great Mother or Great Matrix, is the source (*prabhava*) that holds within its womb, a multitude of benevolent energies,

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[95] *TĀV*, comm. on 3.71b-72a, p. 435. See below also.

[96] *TĀV*, comm. on 3.74b-75a, p. 438.
Also see Dyczkowski, *Doctrine*, p. 114. He explains the liminal nature of this energy, i.e., that it may lead one either to liberation or to bondage, and notes that its ambiguous nature reflects the paradoxical relationship that the Absolute holds with manifestation, i.e., either one of unity or duality. From the absolute point of view, these two modes are complementary; from the relative point of view, unity is seen as liberating, and duality is seen as binding.

infinite in number (*garbhīkṛtānantaśaktivrātā*); collectively, these energies are the providers of the fruit of the abode of Śiva (*śivadhāmaphalapradāḥ*).[98] Jayaratha also refers to the Ruler (*prabhu*) as "the supreme Yoginī who extracts from all (of these energies)" (*parā sarvātkarṣayoginī*).[99] This again is a reference to Trika at its ground level, now being interpreted by JR in terms of consciousness.

Various Observations and Clarifications Regarding the Phonemes (*TĀ* 3.181b-200a)

I next discuss three sets of verses (verses 188b-190a, 195b-197a, 198a-200a) found in the section where AG concludes his discussion of the gradual rising of the cognitions, making various observations and clarifications regarding the phonemes.

The Banging Together of Two Poles within Ultimate Consciousness (*TĀ* 3.188b-190a; pp. 535-537)[100]

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97 See Torella, IPK. This term is used throughout the *ĪPK*, on which see Torella, IPK. I follow Torella in translating this term as "knowing subject."
98 *TĀV*, comm. on 3.71b-72a, p. 435.
99 *TĀV*, comm. on 3.71b-72a, p. 435.
100 References to *mṛś* terms: Abhinavagupta, 188b: *parāmṛśya* and *parāmarśaka*.

At verses 188b-190a AG describes the arising of the long vowels and the compound vowels. These verses are important in that AG for the first time refers to two poles of reflexive awareness. In verses 198a-200a (discussed below), AG will again refer to an object of reflexive awareness, this time in describing the Creative Sonic Mother, identified with Śakti. Thus, the paradigm AG has in mind here is again Śiva and Śakti in union. JR's commentary is important because it reveals the Krama influence on the Trika tradition.

In describing the arising of the long vowels AG refers to both a subject pole of reflexive awareness (*parāmarśaka*) and an object pole of reflexive awareness (*parāmṛśya*). These two poles are said to bang together fusing into one. In describing the arising of the compound vowels AG describes a similar fusion; here he states that the fusion takes the form of the enjoyer, that is, the knowing subject.[101]

AG first encodes the *saṃdhi* rule "*A* + *A* --> *Ā*." He then tells us that the same pattern applies to both Will and Unfolding. Thus, the subject and object poles of Will (*Icchā*, the phoneme *I*) bang together to give Domination (*Īśāna*, the phoneme *Ī*), or, in terms of *saṃdhi*, "*I* + *I* --> *Ī*;" and the subject

and object poles of Unfolding (*Unmeṣa,* the phoneme *U*) bang together to give Decrease or Undulation (*Ūnatā* or *Ūrmi,* the phoneme *Ū*), or in turns of *saṃdhi,* "*U* + *U* --> *Ū*." AG writes:

> [*Saṃdhi* Rule *A* + *A* --> *Ā*:] The Ultimate [the phoneme *A*], in accordance with the existence of the reflexively known [the object pole of reflexive awareness] (*parāmṛśya*) and the reflexive knower [the subject pole of reflexive awareness] (*parāmarśaka*), having attained the form of banging together, [becomes] the object of enjoyment. [*Saṃdhi* Rule *I* + *I* --> *Ī*:] It is the same with Will [the phoneme *I*] . . . [*Saṃdhi* Rule *U* + *U* --> *Ū*:] and the other one [Unfolding [the phoneme *U*]].[102]

AG then encodes the *saṃdhi* rules producing the compound vowels: "*A* or *Ā* + *I* --> *E* or *AI*" and "*A* of *Ā* + *U* --> *O* or *AU*." AG writes:

> [*Saṃdhi* Rules *A* or *Ā* --> *E* or *AI*; *A* + *Ā* --> *O* or *AU*:] With respect to the Ultimate and Bliss, when Will and the other one [Unfolding] reach the state of enjoyable, there is the arising of the compound vowels and it is said that their form is the enjoyer.

AG again is talking on many levels at once. Taking this as a metaphysical statement AG is again stating that there are two poles existing

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[101] See Pandey's brief reference to this in *Abhinavagupta*, p. 664.

[102] *TĀ* 3.188b-190a:
anuttaraṃ parāmṛśyaparāmarśakabhāvataḥ//188//
saṃghaṭṭarūpatāṃ prāptaṃ bhogyamicchādikaṃ tathā/
anuttarānandabhuvāmicchādye bhogyatāṃ gate//189//
saṃdhyakṣarāṇāmudayo bhoktṛūpaṃ ca kathyate/
I follow Gnoli in translating the phrase *anuttarānandabhuvām;* I am uncertain about the meaning of *bhuvām*. Pandey refers to 188b-189a and 189b-190a in *Abhinavagupta*, p. 665 and p. 664, respectively.

within the Ultimate in the form of the phoneme *A*. It may rightly be asked: How is this possible if for AG in reality the Ultimate is unitary? One answer is that this only a theoretical model. This is the answer JR in fact provides, taking AG's reference as an opportunity to delve deeper into a discussion of the ultimate. JR emphasizes the ideal nature of the appearance of these two poles, saying that it takes place only within the Ultimate's own self. Given that the Ultimate is reflexively aware of itself, it may be understood theoretically that there is a subjective pole which reflects and an object pole on which there is reflection. In other words, Jayaratha is saying that insofar as an enjoyer exists only in relation to an enjoyable, there must exist an enjoyable, an object pole of reflexive awareness, given that there is an enjoyer. Jayaratha continues and says that these two poles then are attracted to each other, and embrace each other; that is, the Ultimate embraces itself or comes into contact with itself. Phonematically, the result is the second phoneme, Bliss (*Ānanda*, the phoneme *Ā*), arising only because the two poles of the first phoneme fuse together.[103]

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[103] Jayaratha writes: "The Ultimate [the phoneme *A*], the primordial phoneme, the supreme form, appears within its own self as both enjoyer and enjoyable; and due to

JR also notes that the three long vowels are associated with the lunar aspect, with the enjoyable, and hence with bliss; it may be assumed then that the short vowels are associated with the enjoyer, i.e., the knower. As I will discuss further below, this particular association with moon and sun reveals an appropriation of Krama ideas by AG in his Trika system. Before discussing this further, I need to digress and discuss the Krama system and in particular its influence on Trika.

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mutual longing, they attain a state of unifying friction. It is called 'Enjoyable.' Otherwise there would be neither enjoyer-ness nor enjoyable-ness. Because of the mutual dependency of those two, therefore, because of the unifying friction of the two-fold form, the enjoyable, characterized by the *ā*-sound, comes into being. Such is the meaning. And enjoyable here means that 'it has begun to speak.' Thus, by means of predominance [of the enjoyable] that [the *ā*] precisely is acquired. Like that, in Will [the phoneme *I*] and Unfolding [the phoneme *U*] in its own self by means of being both enjoyer and enjoyable having reached unifying friction, the state of enjoyable, whose self is Domination [the phoneme *Ī*] and Decrease [the phoneme *Ū*], is reached [by Will and Unfolding]. Thus, rightly it is said, 'From this here [the threefold short-vowels] the threefold long-vowels are manifest in the lunar form.'"

TĀV, comm. on 188b-189a, pp. 535-6:

anuttaram–ādivarṇalakṣaṇaṃ paraṃ rūpaṃ svātmani bhoktṛbhogyabhāvamābhāsya parasparainmukhyena saṃghaṭṭarūpatāṃ prāptaṃ sat, 'bhogyam' ityucyate, anyathā na bhoktṛtvaṃ bhogyatvaṃ ca bhavet–anyonyāpekṣatvāttayoḥ, tenākāradvayasya saṃghaṭṭādākāralakṣaṇaṃ bhogyaṃ jātamiti tātparyam, bhogyaṃ cātra vaktumupakrāntamiti prādhānyena tadevopāttam, evamicchonmeṣāvapi svātmani bhokṛbhogyabhāvena saṃghaṭṭamāsādyaiṣaṇonatātmabhogyarūpatāmāptāviti yuktamuktam 'ato'tra dīrghatritayaṃ sphuṭaṃ cāndramasaṃ vapuḥ' iti//188-//

The Krama System and Its Relation to the Trika System

It was through the lineage of one Jñānanetranātha (Lord Gnosis-Eye) (fl. c. 850-900) that Abhinavagupta and the Trika tradition became influenced by the Krama tradition of Kashmir and its neo-Kāpālika mysticism.[104] Ultimate Reality for the Krama tradition was the Black Goddess Kālī also known as the "Attractress of Time" (*kālasaṃkarṣinī*). The Attractress was surrounded by twelve goddesses of consciousness, taken to be her emanations. In the second phase of Trika (see my discussion above) this Goddess and her twelve cohorts became integrated into Trika so that the Trika triad of goddesses was seen as emanating from this transcendental Lady.[105] Beyond that, during the third phase of Trika, Krama's consciousness philosophy most likely influenced the metaphysics of Recognition, whose masters, including AG, were initiated into the Krama lineage.[106] In addition, in his Trika hermeneutics using the authoritative revelation of the *MVT*, AG appropriated the Krama tradition as Trika's own; in AG's interpretation, Krama was seen as both contained within

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[104] Sanderson, "Krama Śaivism," p. 14.
[105] Sanderson, "Trika Śaivism," p. 15.
[106] Sanderson, "Krama Śaivism," p. 14.

Trika and as the essence of Trika.[107] In particular the Krama doctrine of the twelve consciousnesses is appropriated by AG as the highest secret Trika teaching. AG also produced exclusively Krama texts outside of his Trika works.[108]

Krama is also connected with the Śakti way towards realization, the topic of AG's *TĀ* 4. According to Pandey, the Krama tradition derives its name from recognizing the purification of differentiation thinking (*vikalpasaṃskriyā*) in successive stages (*krama*), from "obscure" to "pure," as a means of salvation.[109] Similarly, at the beginning of *TĀ* 4, AG describes the śakti way as the purification of differentiated thinking. Differentiated thinking becomes pure thinking, which is the recognition of the ground of one's thinking, or undifferentiated pure consciousness itself, in all of one's thinking.[110]

AG makes various references to Krama throughout *TĀ* 3. In particular, he refers to the Krama wheels of light and bliss in the verses under consideration here; and in other verses found in this chapter he refers

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[107] Sanderson, "Krama Śaivism," p. 14; and "Abhinavagupta," p. 15.
[108] Sanderson, "Abhinavagupta," p. 15.
[109] See Pandey, *Abhinavagupta*, p. 534 at notes 2 and 3 in reference to *TĀ* 4.2a-3b; and p. 463 at note 1 in reference to *TĀ* 4.2a-5a.

to Krama's Lady Black Hole and the twelve Little Kālīs (I discuss both of these other verses below).

Underlying all of these references is AG's motivation to show, as Sanderson has discussed, that Trika contains Krama and that the essence of Trika is the Krama teaching.

Now as I have already noted, in the verses under consideration here, JR and AG refer to consciousness's solar and lunar aspects; such a notion is based on Krama metaphysics. As Padoux describes, Krama metaphysicians, speculating on both the cosmos and consciousness, discussed two wheels, a wheel of light and a wheel of bliss. The former, in which the sun and twelve vowels abide, corresponds to the knower and the means of knowledge, and represents the moment of consciousness turning toward the self. The latter, in which the moon and sixteen vowels dwell, corresponds to the knowable, and represents the moment of consciousness turning toward the world.[111]

These Krama ideas influence AG; the connection is more explicit when he writes in the *TS*:

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[110] See Dyczkowski, *Stanzas*, p. 271 (at n. 9) in reference to *TĀ* 4.2a-7b.

> And regarding these, the first three-fold reflexive awareness consists of the nature of the sun because it has as its essence a share of light, and the last three-fold reflexive awareness consists of the nature of the moon because of the predominance of joy [within it], whose nature is reposing. This is to the extent that there is no entrance [within these six] for a part of action.[112]

In addition, in other parts of *TĀ* 3, he writes:

> When the energy of action is risen in the abode of moon [object], sun [means of knowledge], and fire [subject], there is the undivided light, which is indeed the supreme and empty knowing seminal nucleus.[113]

> The sun is called "means of knowing;" the moon is called "knowable." Those two are mutually conjoined, although both remain independent. This [couple], whose nature is both enjoyer and enjoyable, attains the state of needing one another; thus the form [of the two] is flaming consciousness, known as "variegated light." That which is the supreme principle of the fire is the very [supreme principle] of the knower.[114]

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[111] Padoux, *Vāc*, p. 159 and pp. 159-160, n. 209; note Padoux's references to other parts of AG's works.

[112] *TS* 3, p. 13:
atra ca prācyaṃ parāmarśatrayaṃ prakāśabhāgasāratvāt sūryātmakaṃ, caramaṃ parāmarśatrayaṃ viśrāntisvabhāvāhlādaprādhānyāt somātmakam, iyati yāvatkarmāṃśasya anupraveśo nāsti/
For more on sun and moon, see Padoux, *Vāc*, pp. 158-160, especially note 209 and his further references there; and Muller-Ortega, *Triadic Heart*, pp. 156-7. See White, *Alchemical Body* on the foundations of this lunar language. See also Dyczkowski, *Aphorisms*, p. 200, n. 16 on sun, moon, and fire; and note below.

[113] *TĀ* 3.111a-111b:
uditāyāṃ kriyāśaktau somasūryāgnidhāmani/
avibhāgaḥ prakāśo yaḥ sa binduḥ paramo hi naḥ//111//

[114] *TĀ* 3.121a-123a:
sūrya pramāṇamityāhuḥ somaṃ meyaṃ pracakṣate/
anyonyamaviyuktau tau svatantrāvapyubhau sthitau//121//
bhoktṛbhogyobhayātmaitadanyonyonmukhatāṃ gatam/
tato jvalanacidrūpaṃ citrabhānuḥ prakīrtitaḥ//122//

Thus, these various verses in addition to JR's comments on the verses under consideration here reveal that AG is appropriating Krama metaphysics into his phonematic cosmology. In particular, AG associates the three long vowels with the lunar aspect, the enjoyable, and the wheel of bliss; and the three short vowels with the solar aspect, the enjoyer, and the wheel of light.

The Ground of All Awarenesses (*TĀ* 3.195b-197a; pp. 540-542)[115]

Here Abhinavagupta distinguishes between the aggregate of reflexive awarenesses (*āmarśas* or *parāmarśas*) corresponding to the various phonemes and representative of stages of consciousness, and a single act of reflexive awareness (*vimarśa*) in which all the individual *parāmarśas* are grounded. Each of the individual *parāmarśas* then may be viewed as a single manifestation of the one *vimarśa*. Abhinavagupta writes:

> Therefore, God, the Ultimate, because of His ultimate freedom (*svācchandya*), [and] from the employment of [from being united with] the emissional power, becomes the totality. Thus the Great Lord is full of the energies, the fifty reflexive awarenesses (*āmarśa*)

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yo'yaṃ vahneḥ paraṃ tattvaṃ pramāturidameva tat/

[115] References to *mṛś* terms: Abhinavagupta, 196b: *āmarśa*; 197a: *vimarśa*; Jayaratha, p. 541, l. 16: *āmarśa*; p. 542, l. 4: *parāmarśa*.

[and is] precisely one, its self being reflexive awareness (*vimarśa*). The other energies here precisely are grounded.[116]

Padoux explains that the fifty phonemes do not bring any differentiation to Śiva; there is no differentiated object at which these awarenesses are directed. Only Bhairava as the Mass of Sounds exist; all the sounds exist as potential. The awarenesses exist in the form of resonating potentials (*nāda*); Śiva is thus referred to as "Father and Mother" because in union with an aspect of himself, Śakti, all phonemes, and hence all objects and meanings, will manifest.[117]

Mass of Sounds, Creative Sonic Mother, and the Phonematic Garland (*TĀ* 3.198a-200a; pp. 542-544)[118]

Verses 198a-200a relate Reflexive Awareness to both the Mass of Sounds, equated with Bhairava, and the Creative Sonic Mother, equated with Śakti, who also takes the form of the Phonematic Garland. In

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[116] *TĀ* 3.195b-197a:
tasmādanuttaro devaḥ svācchandyānuttaratvataḥ//195//
visargaśaktiyuktatvātsaṃpanno viśvarūpakaḥ/
evaṃ pañcāśadāmarśapūrṇaśaktirmaheśvaraḥ//196//
vimarśātmaika evānyāḥ śaktayo'traiva niṣṭhatāḥ/

[117] Padoux, *Vāc*, p. 285.

[118] References to *mṛś* terms: Abhinavagupta, 198a: *āmarśa*; 198b: *āmṛśya*; 199b: *āmarśa*; 200a: *āmarśa*; Jayaratha, p. 542, l. 19: *parāmarśa*; p. 542, l. 20: *parāmarśa*; p. 543, l. 2: *āmarśa*; p. 543, l.

particular, AG tells us that the banging together of the Mass of Sounds and the Creative Sonic Mother gives rise to the Phonematic Garland, whose vulva is open. These verses are important in grounding the phonematic recollection and reflexive awareness in the Trika tradition. Abhinavagupta writes:

> [The Mass of Sounds:] In the case of having for its nature one reflexive awareness (*ekāmarśa*), this is the Mass of Sounds (*śabdarāśi*), Bhairava.
>
> [The Creative Sonic Mother:] And, by connection with the shadow (*chāyā*)[119] of the object of reflexive awareness (*āmṛśya*),[120] this precisely is the energy, the Creative Sonic Mother (*mātṛkā*).
>
> [The Phonematic Garland:] And this [Creative Sonic Mother], by banging together with the Mass of Sounds, [becomes] the Phonematic Garland (*mālinī*), whose vulva is open (*bhinnayoni*).[121]

14: *āmṛśya*; p. 543, l. 14: *āmarśanam*; p. 543, ll. 14-15: *āmarśa*; p. 543, l. 15: *parāmarśaka*; p. 543, l. 17: *āmṛśya*; p. 544, l. 4: *vimarśikā*.

119 One sense of the term *chāyā* connects it to pollution in the Brahmaṇical universe, as pointed out by Gavin D. Flood, "Techniques of Body and Desire in Kashmir Śaivism," *Religion* 22, no. 1 (January 1992): p. 49 (referring to Brunner's work on the *Netratantra*): "In this Brahmanical universe the body was constantly polluted through its effluents, and along with the desire that it contains, needed to be controlled through dispassion (*virāga*) and ritual regulations. Indeed failure to do so might result in possession (*āveśa*) by malevolent forces who would enter into the body through the 'hole' in its shadow (*chāyāccidrena*) created by the impurity caused through ritual neglect." Also, "shadow"-women are rooted in the Vedic literature and are a natural part of the Hindu mythological universe: see Wendy Doniger O'Flaherty, *Women, Androgynes, and Other Mythical Beasts* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1980). David White pointed out this second reference.

120 In other words, "faint traces of objectivity" begin to arise, as the pure state comes out of itself: Dyczkowski, *Doctrine*, p. 198. Padoux, *Vāc*, p. 312: "When [the phonematic emanation] is made up of one single act of consciousness . . . this [results in the arising of the phonemes in] the energy, the *mātṛkā*."

For Abhinavagupta, the Mass of Sounds is identical to Śiva/Bhairava; its essence is Reflexive Awareness, as Kṣemarāja, also notes:

> Knowledge (*vidyā*) is that of the expansion of the highest, undifferentiated. [What is called here its] body means its own nature. He whose body is in the form of this knowledge [that is, whose own nature is the highest undifferentiated manifestation] is the Lord as the "Mass of Sounds," whose essence consists of a pulsating radiance, the nature of which is the reflective awareness of the fullness of the [absolute] "I," inseparable from the totality of the universe.[122]

The Creative Sonic Mother or Matrix, is identical to Śakti; together with the Mass of Sounds, these are two aspects of one Ultimate Consciousness; as Mass of Sounds, or the Creative Sonic Mother, Consciousness contains all

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[121] *TĀ* 3.198a-200a:
ekāmarśasvabhāvatve śabdarāśiḥ sa bhairavaḥ/
āmṛśyacchāyayā yogāt saiva śaktiś ca mātṛkā//198
sā śabdarāśisaṃghaṭṭād bhinnayonis tu mālinī/
prāgvannavatayāmarśātpṛthaggvargasvarūpiṇī//199//
ekaikāmarśarūḍhau tu saiva pañcāśadātmikā/
Padoux translates these verses in *Vāc*, p. 305 (at n. 230), p. 312 (at n. 255), and p. 324 (at n. 279). For other references to these verses, see Dyczkowski, *Doctrine*, p. 198 (at n. 194); Pandey, *Abhinavagupta*, p. 666; and Padoux, *Vāc*, p. 307 (at n. 240) and p. 322 (at n. 274). Also, on Mass of Sounds, see *SpK*, verse 45: explicated by Dyczkowski in *Stanzas*, p. 258. Padoux, *Vāc*, p. 322 and p. 322, n. 274, refers to JR's commentary, saying that the wombs or consonants are mixed-up in the sense of being separated by seeds or vowels. Padoux expounds: "The *mālinī* is usually termed *bhinnayoni*, that is, she where the wombs are intermixed, or disturbed, or else: where wombs [consonants] and seeds [vowels] are mixed up, a term justified by the way the fifty phonemes are produced."

[122] Kṣemarāja, *ŚSV* 2.3 (p. 50, lines 9-12), translated by Padoux in *Vāc*, p. 307, n. 238; I have made a minor modification. See also Dyczkowski, *Aphorisms*, p. 70 referring to this passage.

fifty phonemes, the ground of all words and meanings (or objects).[123]

Abhinavagupta refers to these two levels again, later in the *TĀ*:

> Mātṛkā is the power one with Bhairava in His form as the Mass of Sounds (*śabdarāśi*). The various aspects of objectivity in it are not yet manifest but are yet to come, thus it is called Mātṛkā . . . because [this energy] contains in a potential state [the manifest universe like an expectant] mother.[124]

Padoux notes that the second aspect, wherein the first traces of objectivity arise, is considered a reflection (*pratibimba*) of the first aspect. In particular, the Mass of Sounds, the first level, is understood as the emanation contained within the Supreme Voice. Further, the Creative Sonic Mother is understood as the emanation of the Mass of Sounds; it is contained within the Seeing Voice (*paśyantī*) and corresponds to the supreme-nonsupreme (*parā-aparā*) level.[125] When these two aspects unite, they give birth to the Phonematic Garland.[126]

According to *TĀ* 15, the Creative Sonic Mother and the Phonematic Garland are *mantras* representing Śiva and Śakti, respectively. Both are associated with particular orders of the alphabet. The former is associated

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123 See Dyczkowski, *Doctrine*, p. 198.
124 *TĀ* 15.130b-131a: translated by Dyczkowski in *Aphorisms*, p. 21.
125 Padoux, *Vāc*, p. 312.
126 Dyczkowski, *Aphorisms*, p. 71.

with the normal order, beginning with the phoneme *a* and ending with the phoneme *kṣa;* the latter is associated with a scrambled-up version of that order, actually beginning with the phoneme *na* and ending with the phoneme *pha*. The ritual described in *TĀ* 15 includes identifying one's self with Śiva and Śakti through the installation of these *mantras*.[127] In the same chapter AG identifies Mālinī and Mātṛkā with Parā; later in *TĀ* 3 he identifies Mālinī with Parā, representing the thirty-seventh principle, ultimate consciousness which embraces and unites the other thirty-six principles.[128]

The roots of these deities go back to Trika I, whose pantheon includes five essential *mantra*-deities: in addition to the three Goddesses Parā, Parāparā, and Aparā, it includes the two alphabet deities, known as the "Mass of Sounds," or the "Creative Sonic Mother;" and the "Phonematic Garland."[129]

These are the deities for those who imagined the world in its essence as sonic, or as a manifestation of a God-Who-Is-Sound. These deities were the sources of all the fifty phonemes and hence the source of all sound, life,

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[127] Sanderson, "Maṇḍala," p. 173; and Gnoli, *LDSS*, pp. 141-142, nn. 94 and 95.
[128] Sanderson, "Visualization," p. 45.

and, meaning. Most importantly, they were the sources of *mantras*; *mantras* were vital then because of their connection to this source, which allowed the practitioner to return to such a source.[130]

Earlier we have seen AG interpreting through his hermeneutics of consciousness the three Goddesses; here he interprets the two alphabet deities. This section of the *TĀ* is concerned solely with the Mass of Sounds/Creative Sonic Mother. This is represented by the *mantra AHAṂ*, which, in virtue of containing both the first and last letters of the alphabet, contains all fifty phonemes; it also refers to ultimate "I" consciousness.

Later AG writes:

> That Reflexive Awareness within the natural Self of the Lord, whose internal essence is the indivisible totality, is said to be characterized by the existence of nonduality.[131]

> With respect to the nature of the nonduality of Śiva and Śakti, of the Ultimate and the Emissional Power, the Reflexive Awareness of the All-Pervading, because of its super-abundancy, [it] is called "I."[132]

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[129] Sanderson, "Visualization," p. 32.
[130] See Dyczkowski, *Aphorisms*, p. 61.
[131] *TĀ* 3.202b-203a:
aparicchinnaviśvāntaḥsāre svātmani yaḥ prabhoḥ//202//
parāmarśaḥ sa evokto 'dvayasampattilakṣaṇaḥ/
I am reading *'dvaya-* for *dvaya-*; Gnoli's translation supports this reading.
[132] *TĀ* 3.203b-204a:
anuttaravisargātmaśivaśaktyadvayātmani//203//
parāmarśo nirbharatvād ahamityucyate vibhoḥ/

> Beginning with *A*, the flowing, [and] ending with *H*, whose form is energy, hides itself in the Absolute, in which the entire totality is withdrawn.[133]
>
> Therefore this totality abides in the interior of the energy [and] that [energy] [abides within the interior of] the supreme Ultimate [and] that [supreme Ultimate] [abides within the interior of] that [energy]. Such in truth [is] the intertwining by the All-Pervading.[134]

Abhinavagupta's purpose in this section is to show how in the context of ritual, the *AHAṂ mantra* leads to liberation; it is able to do so precisely because it embodies Ultimate Consciousness; he does this elsewhere for other *mantras*, but here he is concerned with the Mass of Sounds *mantra*.[135]

Dyczkowski points out that Utpaladeva had already understood Reflexive Awareness as the Supreme Word which is the Heart of Consciousness; but, Dyczkowski notes, there is no mention of either the Creative Sonic Mother or the Vitality of Mantra in Utpaladeva's writings. It is Abhinavagupta who goes one step further by equating Reflexive Awareness with the Creative Sonic Mother.

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[133] *TĀ* 3.204b-205a:
anuttarādyā prasṛtir hāntā śaktisvarūpiṇi//204//
pratyāhṛtāśeṣaviśvānuttare sā nilīyate/

[134] *TĀ* 3.205b-206a:
tad idaṃ viśvam antaḥstham śaktau sānuttare pare//205//
tat tasyām iti yat satyaṃ vibhunā saṃputikṛtiḥ/

Perhaps the most provocative passage in these verses is that which describes the Phonematic Garland as "*bhinnayoni*." In high hermeneutics, *yoni* refers to the womb-vowels, the consonants; and *bhinna* refers to being mixed-up with the seed-letters, the vowels. At the same time, this passage may be read as the *yoni*, or vulva, being split, or open. David White notes that this is a clear reference to early Tantra:

> In this role, the Yoginī serves as a conduit, through initiation and ritual, for the transmission of the clan or lineage essence, which uninitiated males intrinsically lack: there is a literal fluid flow from the "mouth" of Śiva-Bhairava to that of the Goddess (who, even in her role as transmitter of *mantras* in hight Hindu Tantra, is called *bhinnayoni*, "she whose vulva is open"), from her to a guru and/or a Yoginī, and thence to a male Siddha initiate.[136]

AG's association of Reflexive Awareness with both the Creative Sonic Mother and the Phonematic Garland takes on new meaning when we recall that Reflexive Awareness is the Vitality of Mantra; such Vitality in other contexts is referred to as Emission (*visarga*). The Phonematic Garland becomes the Emission, which again in one sense refers back to sexual fluids. AG writes:

> That [Emission] precisely is called the "Mass of Sounds" and [she is also] known as the "Creative Sonic Mother;" from the penetration

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[135] Sanderson, "Visualization," p. 77.
[136] White, "Transformations," p. 193.

> into the Agitated by the Agitator, she is understood to be the "Phonematic Garland." Beautiful in arising from the emission of the coming together of seed and *yoni*, the Phonematic Garland precisely is understood as the Supreme Energy, whose body is the Totality.[137]

The Seeing Voice, Middle Voice, and Corporeal Voice (*TĀ* 3.234a-267b)

Here I discuss two sets of verses (234a-236b and 251b-253a) found in the section where Abhinavagupta begins his account of the "levels of the voice."[138] As I have noted above, in both of these sets of verses AG refers back to the Krama system.

The Yoking of Bhairava and Lady Black Hole (*TĀ* 3. 234a-236b; pp. 575-578)[139]

Verses 234a-236b are significant in that AG refers to the yoking of the Krama goddess Lady Black Hole and Bhairava. Significantly, he describes

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[137] *TĀ* 3.232a-233b:
śabdarāśiḥ sa evokto mātṛkā sā ca kīrtitā/
kṣobhyakṣobhakatāveśānmālinīṃ tāṃ pracakṣate//232//
bījayonisamāpattivisargodayasundarā/
mālinī hi parā śaktirnirṇītā viśvarūpiṇī//233//

[138] See Padoux, *Vāc*, chapter 4.

[139] References to *mṛś* terms: Abhinavagupta, 235a: *pratyavamarśa;* Jayaratha, p. 576, l. 5: *vimarśa;* p. 576, l. 7: *vimarśa;* p. 576, l. 16: *parāmarśa;* p. 577, l. 7: *parāmarśa.*

this union as having the nature of reflexive awareness and thus giving rise to the totality. In this way, AG overcodes the Krama vision and at the same time understands reflexive awareness in terms of the Krama vision of reality.

At *TĀ* 3.234a, AG equates the Phonematic Garland with the Attractress of Time (*kālasaṃkarṣiṇī*) or Lady Black Hole. Although he uses the Sanskrit phrase *kālasya karṣiṇī*, he is clearly referring to Kālasaṃkarṣiṇī, the goddess identical to Kālī and worshipped by Krama as Ultimate Reality.[140] Abhinavagupta writes:

> This [the Phonematic Garland (*mālinī*)] [is] in reality the One precisely, Supreme, Attractress of Time.
>
> Through yoking with the Power-Wielder [Bhairava], the state of the Couple (*yāmala*) is reached.
>
> The Reflexive Awareness of that [Couple], which is completely full, whose nature is the "I," within its own-self, because of its freedom, manifests diversity.
>
> And in the illuminating of diversity, its body is said to be threefold, called "Seeing," "Middle," and the "Gross Corporeal."[141]

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[140] See Jayaratha's commentary on *TĀ* 234a-236b; I discuss part of this below. See also Sanderson, "Maṇḍala," pp. 188-204, and "Visualization," pp. 58-64; and Dyczkowski's comments in *Stanzas*, p. 46, and *Aphorisms*, pp. 168-169.

[141] *TĀ* 3.234a-236b:
eṣā vastuta ekaiva parā kālasya karṣiṇī/
śaktiśaktimadyogena yāmalatvaṃ prapadyate//234//
tasya pratyavamarśo yaḥ paripūrṇo'hamatmakaḥ/

Abhinavagupta understands the Attractress of Time as Supreme Consciousness seducing Time itself, understood here as Bhairava, and uniting with Him to give rise to reflexive awareness.

Jayaratha simply continues Abhinavagupta's hermeneutics of consciousness. At verse 235, he says that the self which is the "I" is the reflexive awareness that goes beyond convention. It is completely full, because it is able to take on multiple forms, purposely subjecting itself to limitation.[142] At verse 236, he states that AG is referring to Reflexive Awareness whose form is Supreme Speech, the "I."[143] Padoux describes this as Supreme Consciousness experiencing the Reflexive Awareness (*pratyavamarśa* or *parāmarśa*) of the "I," containing the whole universe and intensely asserting itself; from that the three levels of Voice emerge.[144]

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sa svātmani svatantratvādvibhāgamavabhāsayet//235//
vibhāgābhāsane cāsya tridhā vapurudāhṛtam/
paśyanti madhyamā sthūlā vaikharityabhiśabdatam//236//
I read *śaktiśaktimadyogena* for *śaktimadbhedayogena*, following Sanderson, "Visualization," p. 45.

142 *TĀV*, comm. on 3.235a-235b, p. 576.

143 *TĀV*, comm. on 3.236a-236b, p. 577:
asyeti parāvāgrūpasya ahamātmanaḥ parāmarśasya.
See also Padoux, *Vāc*, pp. 170-1 for his translation of this comment.

144 Padoux, *Vāc*, p. 201.

In other parts of the *TĀ*, consistent with his attempt to understand the Attractress as an aspect of consciousness, AG derives both names from the root *kal*, and interprets each one of five different meanings of the root in terms of consciousness; in this way, through the method of creative etymology (*nirvacana*), AG is able to equate the Attractress of Time with Consciousness.[145]

Again, another way of representing the couple is phonematically; the two are also represented by the phonemes *A* and *H*; and as these two phonemes in term represent *AHAṂ*, understood as the completely full and reflexively aware "I," [146] so too do Bhairava and Lady Black Hole represent the experience of reflexive awareness.

Here then, just as he previously overcodes Trika sources, Abhinavagupta now overcodes Krama sources. As Dyczkowski explains, insofar as the Phonematic Garland is interpreted in terms of the Reflexive

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145 See Alexis Sanderson, "Meaning in Tantric Ritual," in *Essais sur le Rituel III: Colloque du Centenaire de la Section des Sciences religieuses de l'École Pratique des Hautes Études*, ed. A.M. Blondeau, and K. Schipper (Lovain and Paris: Peeters, 1995), p. 64; Dyczkowski, *Aphorisms*, pp. 168-169; and *TĀ* 3.251b-253a and 4.173b-175b. I have translated both of the *TĀ* passages below.

146 Dyczkowski, *Stanzas*, p. 46. For more on *yāmala*, see Muller-Ortega's section on "The Divine Pair in Union," in *Triadic Heart*, pp. 109-111; there he relates the notion of *yāmala* to the notion of *vimarśa*.

Awareness of the "I," Krama is interpreted by AG to have already embraced the notion of Reflexive Awareness as the ground of reality.[147]

Finally, it is clear that AG has both the cremation grounds Kula and erotico-mystical Kaula on his mind; a few verses later AG's thoughts become more transparent when he describes the process of extracting the liquid bliss,[148] and satiating the deities, who then turn back to lie down with their Lord Bhairava: [149]

> Into the oblation-eating belly of one's own consciousness, all existing things are hurled violently; they sacrifice their portion of differentiation, consuming it by fire with their own energy.[150]
>
> When the fragmentation of existing things is dissolved by [this] violent cooking, the deities of consciousness [the senses] eat the universe that has become the nectar of immortality [the "I"].[151]
>
> These [deities] now satisfied, they lie down with God, no different from [Him] who is Bhairava, the Sky of Consciousness, dwelling in the secret space of the full heart of their selves.[152]

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147 Dyczkowski, *Stanzas*, p. 46.

148 I am translating the term *rasa* as "liquid bliss." I am influenced here by Alexis Sanderson who, although not creating the one phrase "liquid bliss," was the first to put together the two different connotations, "liquid" and "bliss," in translating the term *rasa*. I say more about this term later, especially in my fourth and sixth chapters.

149 See Muller-Ortega, *Triadic Heart*, p. 195.

150 *TĀ* 3.262a-262b:
nijabodhajaṭharahutabhujī bhāvāḥ sarve samarpitā haṭhataḥ/
vijahati bhedavibhāgaṃ nijaśaktyā taṃ samindhānāḥ//262//

151 *TĀ* 3.263a-263b:
haṭhapākena bhāvānāṃ rūpe bhinne vilāpite/
aśnantyamṛtasādbhūtaṃ viśvaṃ saṃvittidevatāḥ//263//

152 *TĀ* 3.264a-264b:

Even in his apparently abstract exposition of the phonematic emanation and the levels of the Voice, AG never loses connection with the ground and source of his visions, that very down-to-earth Tantric world of extracting and satiating, transacting and gathering.

AG, the master of hermeneutics, freely and easily transacts in meaning much as his tantric forebears transacted in fluids. I will return to this idea in my conclusion.

The Twelve Little Kālis (*Kālikās*) (*TĀ* 3.251b-253a; pp. 586-587)[153]

Verses 251b-253a are important in that AG interprets the Twelve Little Kālis of the Krama as forms of reflexive awareness. He equates these with twelve aspects of Śiva's consciousness and with the twelve primary vowels. In this way he again interprets the phonematic emanation in terms of the Krama experience.

The Krama model of consciousness, originating in a ritual described in the *JYT*, has been described in some detail by Sanderson. In this scheme,

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tāstṛptāḥ svātmanaḥ pūrṇa hṛdayaikāntaśāyinam/
cidvyomabhairavaṃ devamabhedenādhiśerate//264//

153 References to *mṛś* terms: Abhinavagupta, 252b: *parāmarśa*; Jayaratha, p. 587: *parāmṛśanti*.

although the twelve Kālis are referred to as "emanations" of Mahākālī, the practitioner comes to experience these emanations as identical to their source. In a ritual of sexual union with a Messenger, Mahākālī and the twelve Kālis are worshipped, climaxing in the recognition of the nonduality of ground and appearance, and of liberation and bondage. Kālī becomes the inner experience of the ultimate Void beyond ego continually pulsating through the voids of the senses.[154]

AG is not the first to incorporate this Krama model of consciousness. Even prior to AG, as noted above, the twelve Kālīs of Krama had been incorporated into Trika during its second phase.

AG however does take the appropriation one step further. In expounding the Trika discourse and practice, he claims that the essence of the Trika scheme is the Krama, and he does this by claiming that the doctrine of the twelve consciousnesses is the highest, most secret teaching.[155]

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[154] Sanderson, Śaivism and the Tantric Traditions," p. 677.

At *TĀ* 3.251b-253a, AG writes:

Because of the interprenetration, risen as the energy of action, of these [energies], [there arises] the twelve consciousnesses, [previously] taught, in which all is obtained. All of those [twelve energies] are the pre-eminent wheel of energies of the God of Gods; by means of such, the God of Gods, full of energies, is Bhairava. Because of [1] having reflexive awareness as their nature, because of either [2] drawing away or [3] emission, because of the [4] calculation of a quantity, [and] because of [5] knowledge, these [twelve energies] are in some [scriptures] called "Kālikās." [156]

What AG does here then is interpret the Kālikās in terms of consciousness. Each of the Kālikās have reflexive awareness as their nature. This appears to be the most important reason in AG's mind; although he does give four other creative interpretations of Kālikā's name, it is the first reason, having reflexive awareness as their nature, that AG highlights elsewhere, in his own summary of *TĀ* 3 in *TS* 3. It is there also that AG lists various ways of dividing up the consciousness of Śiva: one, two, nine, fifty, eighty-one, and twelve. AG recognizes the validity of

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[155] Sanderson, "Abhinavagupta," p. 8 and "Krama Śaivism," p. 14; and Dyczkowski, *Doctrine*, p. 30 and p. 234, n. 114.

[156] *TĀ* 3.250b-253a:
āsāmeva samāveśātkriyāśaktitayoditāt//250//
saṃvido dvādaśa proktā yāsu sarvaṃ samāpyate/
etāvaddevadevasya mukhyaṃ tacchakticakrakam//251//
etāvatā devadevaḥ pūrṇaśaktiḥ sa bhairavaḥ/
parāmarśātmakatvena visargākṣepayogataḥ//252//
iyattākalanājjñānāttāḥ proktāḥ kālikāḥ kvacit/

various views regarding the divisions of consciousness (much as that Upaniṣadic seer Yājñavalkya appreciated the diversity of perspectives on the number of gods). For AG, from one perspective Śiva is one; from another perspective, consciousness is two; and so on. However, in keeping with his program to overtake Krama, it is twelve that AG highlights:

> In this way when [there is] a reflexive awareness, which is non-separate, of so much [of the totality], then the Blessed One is one only.
>
> When there is a reflexive awareness, which is divided into parts, as seed and matrix, then [there is] the power holder and power.
>
> The eightfold cognition, [each part taken] separately, in combination with the lord of the wheel makes a set of nine.
>
> When every single reflexive awareness is distinguished, then it consists of fifty.
>
> Regarding that further, with regard to the reflexive awarenesses of [all the] different parts which are possible, it is formed of eighty-one.
>
> In reality, however, exactly six reflexive awarenesses becoming twelve, by means of [both] an outward movement and an inward movement [in each of the six reflexive awarenesses], make the Supreme Lord flourish, in His fullness of the energies of the totality. Those [twelve] precisely, because they are formed of reflexive awareness, are the blessed energies known as the "glorious Kālikās".[157]

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[157] *TS* 3, pp. 17-18:
ityevam iyato yadā nirvibhāgatayā eva parāmarśaḥ tadā eka eva bhagavān, bījayonitayā bhāgaśaḥ parāmarśo śaktimān śaktiśca/ pṛthak aṣṭakaparāmarśo cakreśvarasāhityena navavargaḥ, ekaikaparāmarśaprādhānye pañcāśadātmakatā/ tatrāpi

This passage is important then for two reasons. First, AG highlights the twelve aspects of consciousness, on which he will fully elaborate in *TĀ* 4, making his appropriation of Krama complete. Secondly, he only mentions the characteristic of reflexive awareness.

Interestingly, AG finds further support for his interpretation in an early Trika text:

> And also in the glorious *Essence of Trika* it is said that in the middle one should worship the supreme single syllable, whose name is the "Bhairava-Self," surrounded by twelve *yoginīs*. From these precisely [the twelve *yoginīs*], [there arises] a wheel of energies extending to sixty-four
> [spokes]. . . .[158]

TĀ 3.251b then is an exemplary model of the hermeneutical coup mentioned above, as here AG states that the wheel of energies, consisting of the twelve consciousnesses that are aspects of Śiva's consciousness[159] and

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saṃbhavadbhāgabhedaparāmarśane ekāśitirūpatvam/ vastutastu ṣaṭ eva parāmarśāḥ, prasaraṇapratisaṃcaraṇayogena dvādaśa bhavantaḥ parmeśvarasya viśvaśaktipūrṇatvaṃ puṣṇanti/ tā eva etāḥ parāmarśarūpatvāt śaktayo bhagavatyaḥ śrikālikā iti niruktāḥ/

[158] *TĀ* 3.253b-254b:
śrisāraśastre cāpyuktaṃ madhya ekākṣarāṃ parām//253//
pūjayed bhairavātmākhyāṃ yoginidvādaśāvṛtām/
tābhya eva catuḥṣaṣṭiparyantaṃ śakticakrakam//254//

[159] See Gnoli, *LDSS*, p. 148, n. 115 on *TĀ* 3.250b-251a; and Dyczkowski, *Doctrine*, p. 124: "(The Wheel of Energy) represents the twelve vowels of the Sanskrit alphabet (excluding ṛ, (ṛṛ), ḷ, (ḷḷ)), symbolising the processes and forces operating directly within Śiva-consciousness (rather than Śakti, the universe, which is symbolised by the consonants)."

that are represented by the twelve primary vowels are nothing less than the Twelve Little Kālīs of the Krama experience.

The Totality as a Reflected Image in the Mirror of Consciousness (*TĀ* 3.268a-293b)

Here I discuss two sets of verses (268a-270b and 274a-279b) that are found in the section where AG describes, in his final section of *TĀ* 3, the universe as shining in the mirror of consciousness as a reflection.[160]

The Reflexively Aware Self as Having Realized Śambhu (*TĀ* 3.268a-270b; pp. 598-599)[161]

At verses 268a-270b, Abhinavagupta states that reflexive awareness is the totality appearing within one's consciousness as a reflection. These verses are important in that AG goes on to equate such reflexive awareness with the Śambhu way. Abhinavagupta writes:

> He in whose consciousness, this Totality, the array of things full of diversity, appears as a reflection, that one indeed is the Lord of the Totality. In this way, he in whose self there is such nondualistic, always-arising, Reflexive Awareness, is precisely this one sealed by the way towards realization of Śambhu. This which is the full "I"-Consciousness, the Reflexive Awareness of this one has been

[160] See also Pandey, *Abhinavagupta*, pp. 605 ff.

[161] References to *mṛś* terms: Abhinavagupta, 269b: *parāmarśa*; 270a: *parāmarśa*; Jayaratha, p. 599, l. 6: *parāmarśa*; p. 599, l. 8: *parāmarśa*; p. 599, l. 10: *parāmarśa*.

> examined. Other than that, not one, of those [amongst] *mantras, mudrās*, religious rituals, and worship, [is to be examined] here.[162]

With reference to AG's comment that reflexive awareness is totality appearing as a reflection, Jayaratha explains that the totality is the world full of diversity, the dualistic world of objects and subjects and all the divisions and sub-divisions of these objects and subjects. This set of all things appears in the manner of a city of mirrors (*darpaṇanagaranyāyena*). This is perhaps a reference to AG's own poem in *TS* 3 where AG uses a mirror metaphor:

> The whole world shines here inside the self,
> As an array within a mirror, full of wonderful diversity;
> And yet unlike the mirror, Consciousness reflects on the other which is the universe, in harmony with the flavor of its own reflexive awareness.[163]

JR's commentary also shows JR to be envisioning reflexive consciousness as having a highly complex, even wonderful, nature. One thinks here of the infinite diversity to which a palace of mirrors would give rise. Jayaratha further comments that this diversity appears to the one who has received an intense downpour of divine energy.[164]

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[162] *TĀ* 3.268a-270b:
saṃvidātmani viśvo'yaṃ bhāvavargaḥ prapañcavān/
pratibimbatayā bhāti yasya viśveśvaro hi saḥ//268//
evamātmani yasyedṛgavikalpaḥ sadodayaḥ/
parāmarśaḥ sa evāsau śāṃbhavopāyamudritaḥ//269//
pūrṇāhantāparāmarśo yo'syāyaṃ pravivecitaḥ/
mantramudrākriyopāsāstadanyā nātra kāścana//270//

[163] *TS* 3, p. 19:
antarvibhāti sakalaṃ jagadātmani-iha yadvadvicitraracanā mukurāntarāle/bodhaḥ paraṃ nijavimarśarasānuvṛttyā . . . /viśvaṃ parāmṛśati no mukurastathā tu/
See Kuanpoonpol's insights on this verse in "*Pratibhā*," pp. 239-240.

Abhinavagupta also states that such a reflexive awareness is nondualistic and always-arising. JR explains that when the "I" vibrates as all things, there arises a reflexive awareness which is the direct perception of the self.[165]

When Abhinavagupta states that to have such an awareness is to be marked by the way towards realization of Śambhu, Jayaratha explains that being marked by this means is to be bound to reaching one's proper goal.[166]

Abhinavagupta then states that the reflexive awareness is the full I-consciousness, referring here to the supreme reflexive awareness. Here Jayaratha explains that the reflexive awareness of I-consciousness is the fullness of being all things.[167]

This supreme awareness contains all fifty phonematic awarenesses, symbolic of fifty aspects of consciousness, and, hence, contains the totality of all experience. Just as phonemes are the seeds of words, which are the seeds of sentences, so the fifty aspects of consciousness are the seeds of all

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[164] *TĀV*, comm. on 3.268a-270b, p. 598.

[165] JR writes: "Furthermore, for this one, when shining in this way in the form of the reflection of the set of things, the "I," endowed with such qualities, has become vibrating as consisting of the set of things within the own-self; in this way the reflexive awareness would arise having the form of direct perception of the self, always risen."
TĀV 3, comm. on 268-270, p. 599:
yasyāpyevaṃ bhāvavargasya pratibimbakalpatayāvabhāsane sati svātmanidṛgahameva bhāvavargātmanā prasphurita ityevamātmasākṣātkārarūpaḥ satatoditaḥ parāmarśaḥ syāt. . . /

[166] *TĀV*, comm. on 3.268-270, p. 599:
svasamucitaopeyāsādanena niyamita(ḥ).

[167] *TĀV*, comm. on 3.268-270, p. 599:
sarvaviṣayatā pūrṇo yo'yamahantāparāmarśaḥ.

categories of experience, i.e., the totality.[168] Not only Word is spermatic, Consciousness itself is spermatic.

Finally, Abhinavagupta states that the performance of *mantras*, *mudrās*, religious rituals, and worship are not necessary for the one on this divine path, the way of Śambhu. Practices which necessarily involve dualism are not necessary.[169] Further clarification of this idea is found in the *TS*:

> In this way, from seeing the self as having a form which is pure repose of all the reflexive awareness, [containing] as reflected the divisions of all principles, beings, and worlds, by nondualistic absorption relating to Śambhu, [one attains] the state of liberation while alive. Here also, as before [as in the case of *anupāya*], there are no constraints such as *mantras* and so forth.[170]

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[168] Dyczkowski, *Doctrine*, pp. 185-6 and 188.

[169] According to Dyczkowski however: "The yogi who recognises that pure consciousness, free of thought-constructs (*nirvikalpa*), is his basic state, can practice in any way he chooses; even the most common Mantra will lead him directly to the highest state. . . ." (*Doctrine*, p. 180.)

[170] TS 3, p. 19:
... ityevaṃ sakalaparāmarśviśrāntimātrarūpaṃ pratibimbitasamastatattvabhūtabhuvanabhedam ātmānaṃ paśyato nirvikalpatayā śāṃbhavena samāveśena jīvanmuktatā/ atrāpi pūrvavat na mantrādiyantrāṇā kāciditi/
See also Deba Brata SenSharma, *The Philosophy of Sādhanā: With Special Reference to the Trika Philosophy of Kashmir* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1990), p. 116, in reference to this.

Practice of the Fifty Principles (*TĀ* 3.274a-279b; pp. 601-605)[171]

In verses 274a-279b, Abhinavagupta states that while in the state of non-discursive reflexive awareness the sage should apply the "fifty divisions." These divisions are both the fifty phonemes and fifty categories of reality that are found in the *MVT* in relation to a particular meditative practice. These verses are important in again equating reflexive awareness with the highest method of realization and in implying that all lower methods culminate in this method. AG writes:

> In this non-discursive reflexive awareness, called "the way towards realization of Shambhu," the sage should apply the fifty divisions, previously described.
>
> Seeing the very earth [principle] reflected non-discursively within his own-self, he becomes Bhairava.
>
> This process [is applied] also to the water [principle], and so on, up to the end [when] the supreme principle, transcending all obstructions, pervading, free, all-knowing, which is Śiva, is created [within one's own-self].
>
> Also seeing this reflected in the mirror of unfabricated and illustrious consciousness, the differentiated and imperfect thought spontaneously is transformed into Bhairava.
>
> Just as seeing in front the color red, by means of a non-discursive consciousness, by various means, one is well-established in a unitary knowledge, without parts, of a pot, in the same way, reflexively knowing the own-self, in accordance with the totality of the union of

[171] References to *mṛś* terms: Abhinavagupta, 274a: *parāmarśa*; 279b: *parāmṛśan*; Jayaratha, p. 605, l. 7: *parāmṛśan*.

every single [principle], earth and so on, one shines forth in complete fullness.[172]

Jayaratha explains that by meditating on each one by one, as the means towards realization, the sage creates each of the fifty levels.[173] Jayaratha also points out that the fifty levels are previously described in chapter I of the *TĀ*, beginning with verse 187.[174] There Abhinavagupta speaks of an absorption with fifty parts. Gnoli has pointed out that this absorption with fifty parts goes back to the *MVT*. The fifty parts are derived from the thirty-six principles plus three principles added to these, which are soul, wisdom, and energy, having four aspects, ten aspects, and three aspects respectively.[175] Jayaratha explains further:

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[172] *TĀ* 3.274a-279b:
nirvikalpe parāmarśe śāmbhavopāyanāmani/
pañcāśadbhedatāṃ pūrvasūtritāṃ yojayedbudhaḥ//274//
dharāmevāvikalpena svātmani pratibimbitām/
paśyanbhairavatāṃ yāti jalādiṣvapyayaṃ vidhiḥ//275//
yāvadante paraṃ tattvaṃ samastāvaraṇordhvagam/
vyāpi svatantraṃ sarvajñaṃ yacchivaṃ parikalpitam//276//
tadapyakalpitodārasaṃviddarpaṇabimbitam/
paśyanvikalpavikalo bhairavibhavati svayam//277//
yathā raktaṃ puraḥ paśyannirvikalpakasaṃvidā/
tattaddvāraniraṃśaikaghaṭasaṃvittisusthitaḥ//278//
tadvaddharādikaikaikasaṃghātasamudāyataḥ/
parāmṛśansvamātmānaṃ pūrṇa evāvabhāsate//279//
See also Pandey, *Abhinavagupta*, p. 605 (at n. 2), in reference to 3.275a-276b.
[173] *TĀV*, comm. on 3.274a-276b, p. 602:
ekaikadhyena upāyatayā parikalpaye(t).
[174] *TĀV*, comm. on 3.274a-276b, p. 602.
[175] See Gnoli, LDSS on *TĀ* 1.186b-188a.

> Seeing just the one earth principle as reflected within his own-self, by non-discursive knowledge, but not by mere dualistic discourse, that is, directly realizing [the earth principle] as consisting of pure consciousness of one's own self, because of being the nature of everything, he becomes Bhairava, that is, he vibrates in the form of the supreme light of all.[176]

One directly realizes each of the principles to be none other than one's own pure consciousness.[177] Direct realization in fact is what distinguishes the Śambhu way from the other ways. Although previously it has been said that all fifty principles have to be meditated on, here Jayaratha seems to imply that one becomes Bhairava by meditating on just one principle and that the same holds for each of the other principles.

In the last part of these verses, Abhinavagupta seems to be saying that just as one has a unitary knowledge of a pot arising from various sense impressions such as seeing the color red, so also in this meditation on the principles, beginning with the earth, we come to have a unitary knowledge of our own-self arising from the various single cognitions of each of the principles. A single cognition is the recognition that a single principle is one's own-self.

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[176] *TĀV*, comm. on 3.275a-276b, p. 602:
ekameva dharātattvamavikalpajñānena na tu vikalpamātreṇa svātmani pratibimbitaṃ paśyan svātmasaṃvinmātrarūpatayā sākṣātkurvan sarvasya sarvātmakatvādbhairavatāṃ yāti paraprakāśarūpatayā parisphurat(i) . . . /

According to Jayaratha, Abhinavagupta is responding to the objection that absorption into one's own nature is supposed to be by means of the supreme principle, not by means of each of the individual lower principles. Jayaratha also says that the unitary knowledge of a pot arises from various impressions. One sees the red color, one sees certain forms, such as having a broad base, and so on. Jayaratha concludes:

> In that way, by dependence on the collection of the thirty-five [principles], earth and so on, [the one] seeing the own-self, in a nondualistic state, shines in complete fullness, that is to say, vibrates in the form of pure consciousness of own-self. Such is the meaning.[178]

Finally, this verse also evokes the rise of the *kuṇḍalinī*, from the root-support (*mūlādhāra*), which is identified with the element earth; once she is awakened there, she shoots up to the top of the yogic-metaphysical system.[179] Silburn suggests that each of the three main paths, the Śambhu way, the Śakti way, and the individual way, may be viewed as different stages of *kuṇḍalinī* practice. In the Śambhu way, *kuṇḍalinī*, the subtle body

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[177] See Dyczkowski, *Doctrine*, p. 176, table.

[178] *TĀV*, comm. on 3.278a-279b, p. 605:
tathā dharādir yaḥ pañcāśadātmā samudāyas tadavalambanena svamātmānaṃ nirvikalpakavṛttyā parāmṛśan pūrṇa evāvabhāsate svātmasaṃvittimātrarūpatayā prasphuratityarthaḥ //279//

[179] David Gordon White, personal communication.

correlate of Śakti, is in nondual union with Śiva.[180] The implication is that the other paths reach their culmination in the Śambhu path, and the results that are painstakingly achieved in the lower paths are realized spontaneously and nondiscursively here in the Śambhu path.

[180] Silburn, *Kuṇḍalinī*, p. 4, n. 1.

Chapter II Appendices

Appendix 1
Translation of *TĀ* 3.65a-148a: "The Rising of the Vowels"

(65a-65b)

In this way, the totality is a reflection in the Lord, in the pure sky of the Bhairava-consciousness, self-sufficient, completely independent of the grace of any other.[1]

(66a-66b)

Indeed, the Lord's independence of any other, in being the self of the totality, is recognized as the Supreme Intuition, the Goddess who is Ultimate (*anuttarā*) [the phoneme *A*].[2]

(67a-67b)

Abounding in the unfolding of the Clan (*kula*) of this God who is the Absolute Body (*akula*) [the Clan of the Phoneme *A* = *Anuttara*], She is the Supreme, the Energy of the Clan (*kaulikī śakti*), with which the Lord is inseparable.[3]

(68a-68b)

The doubled form of these two [Śiva and Śakti] is known as "banging together." That very [form] is called "energy of bliss," from which the totality is ejaculated.[4]

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[1] *TĀ* 3.65a-65b:
itthaṃ viśvam idaṃ nāthe bhairavīyacidambare/
pratibimbamalaṃ svacche nakhalvanyaprasādataḥ//65//
[2] *TĀ* 3.66a-66b:
anayāpekṣitā yāsya viśvātmatvaṃ prati prabhoḥ/
tāṃ parāṃ pratibhāṃ devīṃ saṃgirante hyanuttarām//66//
[3] *TĀ* 3.67a-67b:
akulasyāsya devasyakulaprathanaśālinī/
kaulikī sā parā śaktiraviyukto yayā prabhuḥ//67//
[4] *TĀ* 3.68a-68b:

(69a-71a)

The reality beyond supreme and nonsupreme is known as "the Goddess." That is the essence, and that is the heart. It is the emission, the supreme all-powerful Lord. In the *Union with the Goddess* (devīyāmala) *Treatise*, the [goddess] is called "the Attractress of Time." In connection with the "great surpriser" [in the part of the text that treats that sacrifice], she is also called "the Glorious Supreme;" she is at the peak. In the glorious MVT, she is known as "the real stuff of the mothers" (*mātṛsadbhāva*).[5]

(71b-72a)

[Arising of the Phoneme *I*:] In the banging together (*saṃghaṭṭa*), its nature being consciousness (*cit*), reflexive awareness (*pratyavamarśana*) [arises]; [this is] the Power of Desire (*icchāśakti*); among the Benign (*aghorā*) Powers, She is the Supreme Goddess (*parā*), the Ruler (*prabhu*).[6]

(72b-73a)

[Arising of the Phoneme *Ī*:] If that [energy of will] has a disturbed form, the Sovereigness (*īśitrī*) [the phoneme *Ī*] arises; then the supreme Terrible goddesses are born, guides on the path of Śiva.[7]

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tayoryadyāmalaṃ rūpaṃ sa saṃghaṭṭa iti smṛtaḥ/
ānandaśaktiḥ saivoktā yato viśvaṃ visṛjyate//68//

5 *TĀ* 3.69a-71a:
parāparātparaṃ tattvaṃ saiṣā devī nigadyate/
tatsāraṃ tacca hṛdayaṃ sa visargaḥ paraḥ prabhuḥ//69//
devīyāmalaśāstre sā kathitā kālakarṣiṇī/
mahāḍāmarake yoge śrīparā mastake tathā//70//
śrīpūrvaśāstre sā mātṛsadbhāvatvena varṇitā/

6 *TĀ* 3.71b-72a:
saṃghaṭṭe 'smiñcidātmatvād yattatpratyavamarśanam//71//
icchāśaktir aghorāṇāṃ śaktīnāṃ sā parā prabhuḥ/

7 *TĀ* 3.71b-73a:
saiva prakṣubdharūpā cedīśitrī samprajāyate//72//
tadā ghorāḥ parā devyo jātāḥ śaivādhvadaiśikāḥ/

(73b-77b)

[Arising of the Phoneme *U*:] The reflexive awareness (*pratyavamarśa*) of the own-self (*svātma*) which was produced previously, the solitary (*ekavīraka*), abides as the Unfolding (*unmeṣa*) of the universe of the objects of knowledge, due to the state of the energy of knowledge. This is the Supreme-Nonsupreme Goddess (*parā-aparā*), who continuously emits the Terrible (*ghorā*) circle of mothers, the solitary light of the pure-impure path.

[Arising of the Phoneme *Ū*:] When the knowable part, Unfolding, begins to tremble, then, from the preponderance [of this trembling], the manifestation of Deficiency arises within the state of pure consciousness. The developed [manifestation of the Deficiency] is understood as the beginning of the abiding of the knowable category. This development is the assuming of a variety of forms by the ocean of intelligence. The yogins then perceive this [6th vowel] as the seed of the composition of difference.[8]

(78a-81b)

The energy of will, described as having a twofold form, agitated and unagitated, takes into the self the object being desired indeed in two ways: [1] by means of an energy shining as an instantaneous brightness, whose form is flaming [Ṛ Ṝ]; or [2] there is the attaining of the desired object by means of firmness, whose nature is bearing [earth] [Ḷ Ḹ]. Also, if in the energy of opening there exists this knowable [object] in a high degree, even though [the energy of opening] is a

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[8] *TĀ* 3.73b-77b:
svātmapratyavamarśo yaḥ prāg abhūdekavīrakaḥ//73//
jñātavyaviśvonmeṣātmā jñānaśaktitayā sthitaḥ/
iyaṃ parāparā devī ghorām yā mātṛmaṇḍalīm//74//
sṛjaty aviratam śuddhāśuddhamārgaikadīpikām/
jñeyāṃśaḥ pronmiṣan kṣobham yadaiti balavattvataḥ//75//
ūnatābhāsanaṃ saṃvinmātratve jāyate tadā/
rūḍhaṃ tajjñeyavargasya sthitiprārambha ucyate//76//
rūḍhireṣā vibodhābdheścitrākāraparigrahaḥ/
idaṃ tadbhedasaṃdarbhabījaṃ cinvanti yoginaḥ//77//
I am reading *tadbheda-* for *tadbīja-* following Jayararatha's reading: noted first by Gnoli.

position of development [of the knowable], it is not the place of [its] primordial birth. Thus the fourfold quality of the power of will is called "supreme nectar;" and because of the nonexistence of another agitation, this [set of four] is not the seed of anything.[9]

(82a-83a)

Being a seed [seminality] is being an agitator; being a yoni [matrix] is being a bearer of agitation. Consciousness has the form of an agitator; it is agitated and it also agitates. Agitation would be the inherent [intrinsic] nature of knowable objects; the process of agitating is the removal [extrincization/extracting] of that [inherent/intrinsic nature].[10]

(83b-84a)

Agitation is the state of wishing to emit a part of the seed which is one [and] no different from the totality that stands between [within]. They know agitating as the manifestation of the desire for that-ness in one not having that desire.[11]

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[9] *TĀ* 3.78a-81b:
icchāśaktirdvirūpoktā kṣubhitākṣubhitā ca yā/
iṣyamāṇaṃ hi sā vastudvairūpyeṇātmani śrayate//78//
aciradyutibhāsinyā śaktyā jvalanarūpayā/
iṣyamāṇasamāpattiḥ sthairyeṇātha dharātmanā//79//
unmeṣaśaktāvastyetajjñeyaṃ yadyapi bhūyasā/
tathāpi vibhavasthānaṃ sā na tu prācyajanmabhūḥ//80//
icchāśakterataḥ prāhuścāturūpyaṃ parāmṛtam/
kṣobhāntarasyāsadbhāvānnedaṃ bījaṃ ca kasyacit//81//
[10] *TĀ* 3.81a-83a:
prakṣobhakatvaṃ bījatvaṃ kṣobhādhāraśca yonitā/
kṣobhakaṃ saṃvido rūpaṃ kṣubhyati kṣobhayatyapi//82//
kṣobhaḥ syājjñeyadharmatvaṃ kṣobhaṇā tadbahiṣkṛtiḥ/
[11] *TĀ* 3.83b-84a:
antaḥsthaviśvābhinnaikabījāṃśavisisṛkṣutā//83//
kṣobho'tadicche tattvecchābhāsanaṃ kṣobhaṇāṃ viduḥ/

(84b-85a)

Having entered into unity with the desired [object], one attains the object; the descendants of the glorious Somānanda call this "the bearer of agitation."[12]

(85b-87b)

The seed is the pure knowable for the consciousnesses, such [consciousnesses] as the sovereigness and so on, whose distinction is not manifested; in connection with which [the seed], there is seedness with respect to the vowel. The above-mentioned desire for emitting that seed is the rising, wherefrom there is the perceptible, being made visible, whose form is opened out of the consciousness-self. Such is the agitated, whereas the process of agitating affects other knowers made silent. By force, there is expulsion of the part of indifference of these [knowers], by the power of consciousness.[13]

(88a-88b)

Further, this manifest desire to emit, when, from inner identity with reflexive awareness, having reached its end, [then] there arises the Agitation-Support (*kṣobhādhara*). Here this is revealed.[14]

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[12] *TĀ* 3.84b-85a:
yadaikyāpattimāsādya tadicchā kṛtinī bhavet//84//
kṣobhādhāramimaṃ prāhuḥ śrīsomānandaputrakāḥ/
[13] *TĀ* 3.85b-87b:
saṃvidāmiṣaṇādīnāmanudbhinnaviśeṣakam//85//
yajjñeyamātraṃ tadbījaṃ yadyogādbījatā svare/
tasya bījasya saivoktā visisṛkṣā ya udbhavaḥ/
yato grāhyamidaṃ bhāsyadbhinnakalpaṃ cidātmanaḥ//86//
eṣa kṣobhaḥ kṣobhaṇā tu tūṣṇīṃbhūtānyamātṛgam/
haṭhādyadaudāsīnyāṃśacyāvanaṃ saṃvido balāt//87//
[14] *TĀ* 3.88a-88b:
jātāpi visisṛkṣāsau yadvimarśāntaraikyataḥ/
kṛtārthā jāyate kṣobhādhāro'traitatprakīrtitatam//88//

(89a-89b)

From there, the interior knowable desires having separate form; from this seed of the totality the whole external reflection will come forth.[15]

(90a-90b)

The nature of the state of being agitated and the agitator is explained by me, from the grace of the Glorious Maheśvara, [my] Master, it has been said.[16]

(91a-92a)

We [again] speak about [the topic] under discussion. The set of four phonemes is not a seed; nor is it a yoni, for it does not attain the state of bearer of agitation.[17] And by means of repose in the very self, that [fourfold set], it is said, has the nature of the nectar of immortality.[18]

(92b-93a)

Thus, the five [vowels], which have been previously mentioned, surging upwards with one another, have manifold forms, from mixing with one another.[19]

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[15] *TĀ* 3.89a-89b:
tatastadāntaraṃ jñeyaṃ bhinnakalpatvamicchati/
viśvabījādataḥ sarva bāhyaṃ bimbaṃ vivartsyati//89//
[16] *TĀ* 3.90a-90b:
kṣobhyakṣobhakabhāvasya satattvaṃ darṣitaṃ mayā/
śrīmanmaheśvareṇoktaṃ guruṇā yatprasādataḥ//90//
[17] *TĀ* 3.91a-91b:
prakṛtaṃ brūmahe nedaṃ bījaṃ varṇacatuṣṭayam/
nāpi yoniryato naitatkṣobhādhāratvamṛcchati//91//
[18] *TĀ* 3.92a:
ātmanyeva ca viśrāntyā tatproktamamṛtātmakam/
[19] *TĀ* 3.92b-93a:
itthaṃ prāguditaṃ yattatpañcakaṃ tatparasparam//92//
ucchaladvividhākāramanyonyavyatimiśraṇāt/

(93b-94a)

The Absolute Supreme Vibration [A] and Bliss [Ā], the two surging upwards together, because of the banging together with will [I] and unfolding [U], attain the state of exceeding diversity.[20]

(94b-95a)

When the two consciousnesses, Absolute [A] and Bliss [Ā] are joined to the Energy of Will [I], that is called "triangle" [E], whose beauty is the joy of Emission.[21]

(95b-96a)

When the energies Absolute [A] and Bliss [Ā] undergo [further] development there, by means of the coupling of the triangles, there is the attainment of the six-angled state [AI].[22]

(96b-97a)

These two precisely [A and Ā] also unite with unfolding [U]. Again they attain a state of identity with that [and] they mutually cause the manifest form of energy of action [AU] to appear.[23]

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[20] *TĀ* 3.93b-94a:
yo'nuttaraḥ paraḥ spando yaścānandaḥ samucchalan//93//
tāvicchonmeṣasaṃghaṭṭādgacchato'tivicitratām/
[21] *TĀ* 3.94b-95a:
anuttarānandacitī icchāśaktau niyojite//94//
trikoṇamiti tatprāhurvisargāmodasundaram/
[22] *TĀ* 3.95b-96a:
anuttarāndandaśakti tatra rūḍimupāgate//95//
trikoṇadvitvayogena vrajataḥ ṣaḍarasthitim/
[23] *TĀ* 3.96b-97a:
ta evonmeṣayoge'pi punastanmayatāṃ gate//96//
kriyāśakteḥ sphuṭaṃ rūpamabhivyaṅktaḥ parasparam/

(97b-98a)

Agitation affects will [I] and unfolding [U] as has been mentioned [to give rise to Ī and Ū]; and these two energies precisely [A and Ā] [unite] with those affected forms also; [however] they partake of the same forms [that arises when there is union with the unagitated forms] [those same forms being E, AI, O, and AU]; they do not abide otherwise.[24]

(98b-103a)

[Someone might raise the following] objection: "Absolute and Bliss, as the natural self, are without division; how, reposed in the natural self, [do they attain] this wonderfulness to such an extent?" Listen up! The Lord of Consciousness, whose nature is immeasurable, is the Lord of the aspects, of the dissolving and rising of the variety of endless energies.[25] If the Great Lord were to abide with a body of one form, then he would abandon being a Great Lord, being Consciousness, as if he were a vase and so on.[26] Indeed, the characteristic of the insentient is being limited light; consciousness is different from the insentient, for it is not to be measured. Therefore the natural energies, surging forth from the ocean of consciousness like waves, join in variety from the banging together within the natural self.[27]

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[24] *TĀ* 3.97b-98a:
icchonmeṣagataḥ kṣobho yaḥ proktastadgaterapi//97//
te eva śaktī tādrūpyabhāginyau nānyathāsthite/
[25] *TĀ* 3.98b-100a:
nanvanuttaratānandau svātmanā bhedavarjitau//98//
kathametāvatīmenāṃ vaicitrīṃ svātmaniśritau/
śṛṇu tāvadayaṃ saṃvinnātho'parimitātmakaḥ//99//
anantaśaktivaicitryalayodayakaleśvaraḥ/
[26] *TĀ* 3.100b-101a:
asthāsyadekarūpeṇa vapuṣā cenmaheśvaraḥ//100//
maheśvaratvaṃ saṃvittvaṃ tadatyakṣadghaṭāditvat/
[27] *TĀ* 3.101b-103a:
paricchinnaprakāśatvaṃ jaḍasya kila lakṣaṇam//101//
jaḍādvilakṣaṇo bodho yato na parimīyate/
tena bodhamahāsindhorullāsinyaḥ svaśaktayaḥ//102//
āśrayantyūrmaya iva svātmasaṃghaṭṭacitratām/

(103b-104a)

This supreme and manifest variety of the mutual banging together of the energies within the natural self is called "the wonderful appearance of the energy of action."[28]

(104b-105a)

This fourteenth abode [the fourteenth stage in the order of the vowels], consisting of the three energies having become manifest, is referred to as "the state of the trident" by the Teacher in the glorious primordial teaching [the MVT].[29]

(105b-106a)

Further, it is called by the masters who see understand reality "the unmanifested," since the possessor of śakti becomes manifested, not by any means at all śakti [itself].

(106b-107a)

"Will, knowledge, and action," which manifest separately, that [set of three] precisely is the possessor of the energy, clearly [manifesting] by means of one's own being-willed and so on.[30]

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[28] *TĀ* 3.103b-104a:
svātmasaṃghaṭṭavaicitryaṃ śaktīnāṃ yatparasparam//103//
etadeva paraṃ prāhuḥ kriyāśakteḥ sphuṭaṃ vapuḥ/

[29] *TĀ* 3.104b-105a:
asmiṃścaturdaśo dhāmni sphuṭībhūtatriśaktike//104//
triśūlatvamataḥ prāha śāstā śrīpūrvaśāsane/

[30] *TĀ* 3.106b-107a:
icchā jñānaṃ kriyā ceti yaspṛthagañjyate//106//
tadeva śaktimatsvaiḥ svairiṣyamāṇādikaiḥ sphuṭam/

(107b-108a)

However when this triad pulsates in harmony, then because of each one's own oppostion to the other, there is not at all any holding back [conditioning] because of each one's own opposition.[31]

(108b-108c)

Therefore this triad of energies, having become mingled, consists of the trident, by penetrating into which, the yogin directly becomes the unmanifest.[32]

(109a-109b)

In this way, beginning from the place of the supreme nectar of immortality, such set of eight [phonemes], by mingling with the bodies of Brāhmī and so on, clearly reaches the state consisting of 64.[33]

(110a-110b)

Here, the energy of the Absolute [A], precisely making its own body abide as manifest, from the opacity of the knowable, takes the form of the knowing seminal nucleus (bindu) [AṂ].[34]

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[31] *TĀ* 3.107b-108a:
etattritayamaikyena yadā tu prasphurettadā//107//
na kenacidupādheyaṃ svasvavipratiṣedhataḥ/
[32] *TĀ* 3.108b-108c:
lolībhūtamataḥ śaktitritayaṃ tattriśūlakam/
yasminnāśu samāveśādbhavedyogī nirañjanaḥ//108//
[33] *TĀ* 3.109a-109b:
itthaṃ parāmṛtapadādārabhyāṣṭakamīdṛśam/
brāhmyādirūpasaṃbhedādyātyaṣṭāṣṭakatāṃ sphuṭam//109//
[34] *TĀ* 3.110a-110b:
atrānuttaraśaktiḥ sā svaṃ vapuḥ prakaṭasthitam/
kurvantyapi jñeyakalākāluṣyādvindurūpiṇī//110//

(111a-111b)

When the energy of action is risen in the abode of moon [object], sun [means of knowledge], and fire [subject], there is the undivided light, which is indeed the supreme and empty knowing seminal nucleus.[35]

(112a-113a)

And therefore in the *Tattvarakṣāvidhāna* it is said by the Supreme Lord: "Dwelling in the interior of the maṇḍala of the lotus of the heart, whose nature is man, energy, and Śiva, is to be known, by the distinct dissolution, as the knowing seminal nucleus, the stainless liberator."[36]

(113b-114a)

Having a nature of subtle resonance, [the knowing seminal nucleus] is sound, abiding in all living beings; by division into high and low, it abides without action.[37]

(114b-116b)

Spontaneous and independent of the variety of things, pleasure and pain, and so on, and white and red, and so on, that is the light. Further, the Master has said:[38] that which neither sun, moon, nor fire illuminate, and further without whose light the splendor of the sun, moon, and fire

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[35] *TĀ* 3.111a-111b:
uditāyāṃ kriyāśaktau somasūryāgnidhāmani/
avibhāgaḥ prakāśo yaḥ sa binduḥ paramo hi naḥ//111//
[36] *TĀ* 3.112a-113a:
tattvarakṣāvidhāne ca taduktaṃ parameśinā/
hṛtpadmamaṇḍalāntaḥstho naraśaktiśivātmakaḥ//112//
boddhavyo layabhedena vindurvimalatārakaḥ/
[37] *TĀ* 3.113b-114a:
yo'sau nādātmakaḥ śabdaḥ sarvaprāṇiṣvavasthitaḥ//113//
adha ūrdhvavibhāgena niṣkriyeṇāvatiṣṭhate/
[38] *TĀ* 3.114b-115a:
hlādataikṣṇyādi vaicitryaṃ sitaraktādikaṃ ca yat//114//
svayaṃ tannirapekṣo'sau prakāśo gururāha ca/

would not exist at all is consciousness; innately however does that [consciousness] shine.[39]

(117a-117b)

Rising from its own freedom and power, light, united with varied limitation, attains the state of respectively different variety, pain and so on.[40]

(118a-118b)

Though difficult to look at [directly], the sun, fallen on the path of waters, becomes joy to the eye; from the limitation of seeing, there is power.[41]

(119a-119b)

That light in the sun and so on, made impure by limitation, thus indeed, depends on the light of consciousness, the great Lord.[42]

(120a-120b)

The very bright and pure light is distinctly called "sun;" [the light that] showers the aspect which is the essence of the objects to be illuminated is called "soma [moon]."[43]

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[39] *TĀ* 3.115b-116b:
yanna sūryo na vā somo nāgnirbhāsayate'pi ca//115//
na cārkasomavahnīnām tatprakāsādvinā mahaḥ/
kimapyasti nijaṃ kiṃ tu saṃviditthaṃ prakāśate//116//
[40] *TĀ* 3.117a-117b:
svasvātantryaprabhāvodyadvicitropādhisaṃgataḥ/
prakāśo yāti taikṣnyādimavāntaravicitratām//117//
[41] *TĀ* 3.118a-118b:
durdarśano'pi gharmāṃśuḥ patitaḥ pāthasāṃ pathi/
netrānandatvamabhyeti paśyopādheḥ prabhāvitām//118//
[42] *TĀ* 3.119a-119b:
sūryādiṣu prakāśo'sāvupādhikaluṣīkṛtaḥ/
saṃvitprakāśaṃ māheśamata eva hyapekṣate//119//
[43] *TĀ* 3.120a-120b:

(121a-123a)

> The sun is called "means of knowing;" the moon is called "knowable." Those two are mutually conjoined, although both remain independent. This [couple], whose nature is both enjoyer and enjoyable, attains the state of needing one another; thus the form [of the two] is flaming consciousness, known as "variegated light." That which is the supreme principle of the fire is the very [supreme principle] of the knower.[44]

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prakāśamātraṃ suvyaktaṃ sūrya ityucyate sphuṭam/
prakāśyavastusārāṃśavarṣi tatsoma ucyate//120//

[44] *TĀ* 3.121a-123a:
sūrya pramāṇamityāhuḥ somaṃ meyaṃ pracakṣate/
anyonyamaviyuktau tau svatantrāvapyubhau sthitau//121//
bhoktṛbhogyobhayātmaitadanyonyonmukhatāṃ gatam/
tato jvalanacidrūpaṃ citrabhānuḥ prakīrtitaḥ//122//
yo'yaṃ vahneḥ paraṃ tattvaṃ pramāturidameva tat/

[45] *TĀ* 3.123b-124a:
saṃvideva tu vijñeyatādātmyādanapekṣiṇī//123//
svatantratvāt pramātoktā vicitro jñeyabhedataḥ/

[46] *TĀ* 3.124b-125a:
somāṃśadāhyavastūtthavaicitryābhāsabṛhiṃtaḥ//124//
tata evāgniruditaścitrabhānurmaheśinā/

[47] *TĀ* 3.125b-126a:
jñeyādyupāyasaṃghātanirapekṣaiva saṃvidaḥ//125//
sthitirmātāhamasmīti jñātā śāstrajñavadyataḥ/

[48] *TĀ* 3.126b-127a:
ajña eva yato jñātānubhavātmā na rūpataḥ//126//
na tu sā jñātṛtā yasyāṃ śuddhajñeyādyapekṣate/

[49] *TĀ* 3.127b-128a:
tasyāṃ daśāyāṃ jñātṛtvamucyate yogyatāvaśāt//127//
mānataiva tu sā prācyapramātṛparikalpitā/

[50] *TĀ* 3.128b-129a:
ucchalantyapi saṃvittiḥ kālakramavivarjanāt//128//
uditaiva sati pūrṇā mātṛmeyādirūpiṇī/

[51] *TĀ* 3.129b-130a:
pākādistukriyā kālaparicchedātkramocitā//129//
matāntyakśaṇavandhyāpi na pākatvaṃ prapadyate/

[52] *TĀ* 3.130b-131a:
itthaṃ prakāśatattvasya somasūryāgnitā sthitā//130//
api mukhyaṃ tatprakāśamātratvaṃ na vyapohyate/

[53] *TĀ* 3.131b-133a:

(123b-124a)

> However, consciousness precisely, as it identifies with the object, depending on no other, because of its freedom, is called "the knower;" it is varied, due to the variety of the knowable.[45]

(124b-125a)

For this reason precisely, fire, strengthened by the appearance of variety, arising from the objects to be burned, i.e., the aspects of soma [the moon], is called "varied light" by the great Lord.[46]

(125b-127a)

Truly independent of the multitude of ways, the knowable and so on, is the stage of consciousness, the measurer, the knower that says "I am," as it is like the knower of the scriptures.[47] For a non-knower precisely does not in form have the nature of the experience [perception] of a knower; however, that is not being a knower, in which pure knowable and so on are dependent.[48]

(127b-128a)

In that condition, the state of being a knower is spoken of on account of its suitableness; however, the state of being the process of knowing precisely is created by the knower that precedes it.[49]

(128b-129a)

Consciousness, though continually surging forth, by abandoning the progression of time, endures as truly risen [and remains] full; it takes on the form of knower, knowable, and so on.[50]

(129b-130a)

However, [ordinary] actions such as cooking and so, because they are limited by time, rise progressively. The intention [to cook] deprived even of the last moment does not reach the state of cooking.[51]

(130b-131a)

In this way, of the principle of light, there abides the state of being moon, fire, and sun. Further, that [light] [remains] primary; [the

characteristic of] being nothing less than the light [in its fullness] is not destroye.[52]

(131b-133a)

Of those [seeds], the first form, which is short, is called "sun." From the force of the bliss of agitation, by the reposing of the long [form], [the long form] is called "moon." Those knowing the scriptures call that which is last, namely, the floating, succeeding the bliss of the moon, and made of light, "consecrated to fire."[53]

(133b-134a)

Here what is pure light, when the threefold abode is abiding, is said to be "the seminal nucleus" in the scripture. That is understood to be the knowing seminal nucleus of Śiva.[54]

(134b-135a)

Just as this [seminal nucleus, the phoneme Ṃ] is precisely different from the phoneme M, bearing only its shadow, [so] the phonemes R, L, and H appear in the form of the barren and emission phonemes [Ṛ, Ḷ, and Ḥ].[55]

(135b-136a)

Just as the I phoneme precisely, by the shadow of a part of the R phoneme, becomes another vowel, in that way precisely, receiving a

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[54] *TĀ* 3.133b-134a:
atra prakāśamātraṃ yatsthite dhāmatraye sati//133//
uktaṃ bindutayā śāstre śivavindurasau mataḥ/
[55] *TĀ* 3.134b-135a:
makārādanya evāyaṃ tacchāyāmātradhṛdyathā//134//
ralahāḥ ṣaṇṭhavaisargavarṇarūpatvasaṃsthitāḥ/
[56] *TĀ* 3.135b-136a:

trace of the M and L phonemes, that [A phoneme], also being a vowel, [becomes] two other [phonemes].[56]

(136b-137a)

Its interior desire to emit, called "the supreme kaulikī," that precisely, by force of agitation, firmly reaches the state of consisting of the nature of emission [AḤ].[57]

(137b-140b)

Further, it is said in the *Three-Headed Bhairava Tantra*, in the final discussion on the pervasion of the aspects: "Therefore the seventeenth aspect appears in the form of nectar of immortality. Through the path of the bindu, whose forms are supreme and nonsupreme, [the seventeenth aspect] is extended. All things are to be illuminated [by this aspect]; and precisely, when there is no emission, that [aspect] is the kuṇḍalikā energy; and then [in the middle of the process it is] the kuṇḍalikā breath; and then, when at the endpoint of emission, it is the supreme kuṇḍalinī. It is called "the sky of Śiva," "supreme Brahman," and "the abode of the self."

(141a-141b)

The movements of emission and resorption are purely the surging forth of the Lord.[58] The propelling from the self, of the self, into the self, is the emissional abiding-place.[59]

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[57] *TĀ* 3.136b-137a:
asyāntarvisisṛkṣāsau yā proktā kaulikī parā//136//
saiva kṣobhavaśādeti visargātmakatāṃ dhruvam/
[58] *TĀ* 3.137b-141a:
uktaṃ ca triśiraḥśāstre kalāvyāptyantacarcane//137//
kalā saptadaśī tasmādamṛtākārarūpiṇī/
parāparasvasvarūpabindugatyā visarpitā//138//
prakāśyaṃ sarvavastunāṃ visargarahitā tu sā/
śaktikuṇḍalikā caiva prāṇakuṇḍalikā tathā//139//
visargaprāntadeśe tu parā kuṇḍalinīti ca/
śivavyometi paraṃ brahmātmasthānamucyate//140//
visargamātraṃ nāthasya sṛṣṭisaṃhāravibhramāḥ/

(142a-142b)

The emission, poured forth in this way, attains the "compressed" state [the phoneme H]; it is called "swan," "breath," "consonant," and "stop-consonant."[60]

(143a-143b)

The Absolute [the phoneme *A* = *Anuttara*], the supreme abode, that precisely is called the "Absolute Body" (*akula*) [the Clan of the Phoneme *A* = *Anuttara*]; the emission of the Lord is called the "Energy of the Clan.[61]

(144a-144b)

Further, the state of being the emission is precisely its abiding as a flowing forth, which extends to the energy of action having become visible, by the gradual rising of bliss.[62]

(145a-145b)

[Just as] the body of the ocean is of such measure as [its] endless, continuous flow of waves, [so] the emission consists precisely of such measure as all that it has projected forth.[63]

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[59] *TĀ* 3.141b:
svātmanaḥ svātmani svātmakṣepo vaisargikī sthitiḥ//141//
[60] *TĀ* 3.142a-142b:
visarga evamutsṛṣṭa āśyānatvamupāgataḥ/
haṃsaḥ prāṇaḥ vyañjanaṃ ca sparśaśca paribhāṣyate//142//
[61] *TĀ* 3.143a-143b:
anuttaraṃ paraṃ dhāma tadevākulamucyate/
visargastasya nāthasya kaulikī śaktirucyate//143//
[62] *TĀ* 3.144a-144b:
visargatā ca saivāsyā yadānandodayakramāt/
spaṣṭībhūtakriyāśaktiparyantā procchalatsthitiḥ//144//
[63] *TĀ* 3.145a-145b:
visarga eva tāvānyadākṣiptaitāvadātmakaḥ/
iyadrūpaṃ sāgarasya yadanantormisaṃtatiḥ//

(146a-148a)

Therefore, the Emission consists of the unmanifest Ha-part, called the principle of desire in the glorious *Family Cave Tantra*.[64] "Directing the mind on that which is the imperishable [phoneme], standing in the throat of the desired one, having the resonating form, without will, meditation, and concentration, one would simultaneously bring the universe into their own power."[65]

Appendix 2
Translation of TĀ 3.181b-200a: "Various Observations and Clarifications Regarding the Phonemes"

(181b-183a)

The [first] set of four and the [second] set of four, standing firmly in the site of the previous twenty-five objects of recognition [the twenty-five phonemes from K to M], are connected with differentiation and non-differentiation in succession. The first set of four [is] experienced as bringing about the differentiation of consciousness; the other set of four is an impeller of unity, giving rise to the nondifferentiation of differentiation.[66]

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[64] *TĀ* 3.146a-146b:
ata eva visargo'yamavyaktahakalātmakaḥ/
kāmatattvamiti śrīmatkulaguhvara ucyate//
[65] *TĀ* 3.147a-148a:
yattadakṣaramavyakta kāntākaṇṭhe vyavasthitam/
dhvanirūpamanicchaṃ tu dhyānadhāraṇavarjitam//147//
tatra cittaṃ samādhāya vaśayedyugapajjagat/
[66] *TĀ* 3.181b-183a:
pañcaviṃśakasaṃjñeyaprāgvadbhūmisusaṃsthitam//181//
catuṣkaṃ ca catuṣkaṃ ca bhedābhedagataṃ kramāt/
ādyaṃ catuṣkaṃ saṃvitterbhedasaṃdhānakovidam//182//
bhedasyābhedarūḍhyekaheturanyaccatuṣṭayam/

(183b-184a)

In this way, the whole collection of phonemes consists of vowels, before partaking of manifestion; for indeed the manifestation [of consonants] has these vowels as its breath.[67]

(184b-186a)

Among the vowels, here it is precisely the hexad that is the basis within the flow of the phonemes; those precisely are the six deities, which are the principal rays of the sun.[68] Because the parts of the moon are within the rays of the sun precisely, therefore here the triad of the long vowels is clearly a lunar appearance.[69]

(186b-188a)

And the moon indeed is precisely not other [than the sun]; and the eaten is not other than the eater. The eater precisely abides in the condition of being the eaten, because [it is] twofold. For a jar, indeed it is not the case that its own appearance is the state of being eaten; that [state] indeed abides in the knower; therefore it is said that that which rises in the knower is the state of this [jar] being known.[70]

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[67] *TĀ* 3.183b-184a:
itthaṃ yadvarṇajātaṃ tatsarva svaramayaṃ purā//183//
vyaktiyogādvyañjanaṃ tatsvaraprāṇaṃ yataḥ kila/
[68] *TĀ* 3.184b-185a:
svarāṇāṃ ṣaṭkameveha mūlaṃ syādvarṇasaṃtatau//184//
ṣaḍdevatāstu tā eva ye mukhyāḥ sūryaraśmayaḥ/
[69] *TĀ* 3.185b-186a
saurāṇāmeva raśmīnāmantaścāndrakalā yataḥ//185//
ato'tra dīrghatritayaṃ sphuṭaṃ cāndramasaṃ vapuḥ/
[70] *TĀ* 3.186b-188a:
candraśca nāma naivānyo bhogyaṃ bhoktuśca nāparam//186//
bhoktaiva bhogyabhāvena dvaividhyātsaṃvyavasthitaḥ/
ghaṭasya na hi bhogyatvaṃ svaṃ vapurmātṛgaṃ hi tat//187//
ato mātari yā rūḍhiḥ sāsya bhogyatvamucyate/

(188b-190a)

[*Saṃdhi* Rule *A* + *A* –> *Ā*:] The Ultimate [the phoneme *A*], in accordance with the existence of the reflexively known [the object pole of reflexive awareness] (*parāmṛśya*) and the reflexive knower [the subject pole of reflexive awareness] (*parāmarśaka*), having attained the form of banging together, [becomes] the object of enjoyment.

[*Saṃdhi* Rule *I* + *I* –> *Ī*:] It is the same with Will [the phoneme *I*] . . .

[*Saṃdhi* Rule *U* + *U* –> *Ū*:] and the other one [Unfolding [the phoneme *U*]].

[*Saṃdhi* Rules *A* or *Ā* –> *E* or *AI*; *A* + *Ā* –> *O* or *AU*:] With respect to the Ultimate and Bliss, when Will and the other one [Unfolding] reach the state of enjoyable, there is the arising of the compound vowels and it is said that their form is the enjoyer.[71]

(190b-191a)

Consisting of Ultimate [the phoneme A] and Bliss [the phoneme Ā], God, the enjoyer precisely is called God, consisting of the Ultimate [the phoneme A] and Bliss [the phoneme Ā]. The will and so on are enjoyers precisely. For that very reason, they are energies.[72]

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[71] *TĀ* 3.188b-190a:
anuttaraṃ parāmṛśyaparāmarśakabhāvataḥ//188//
saṃghaṭṭarūpatāṃ prāptaṃ bhogyamicchādikaṃ tathā/
anuttarānandabhuvāmicchādye bhogyatāṃ gate//189//
saṃdhyakṣarāṇāmudayo bhoktṛūpaṃ ca kathyate/
I am not certain about the meaning of bhuvām and I follow Gnoli in translating the phrase anuttarānandabhuvām.

[72] *TĀ* 3.190b-191a:
anuttarānandamayo devo bhoktaiva kathyate//190//
icchādikaṃ bhogyameva tata evāsya śaktitā/

(191b-192a)

If the enjoyable is merged in the enjoyer, clearly the enjoyer in reality is that. Therefore, among the six, the triad is the essence, whose nature is consciousness, will, and unfolding.[73]

(192b-194a)

That very triad they call the supreme brilliance of Bhairava; it is the triad of the Supreme Lord, praised as the Energy of Fullness.[74] Because the totality is projected by that, therefore when this is worshipped, the worship rises to the one possessing all energies, the one without distinctions.[75]

(194b-195a)

This might is so great that it is not possible to measure; who could limit the energy of the one with unlimited measures?[76]

(195b-197a)

Therefore, God, the Ultimate, because of His ultimate freedom (*svācchandya*), [and] from the employment of [from being united with] the emissional power, becomes the totality. Thus the Great Lord is full of the energies, the fifty reflexive awarenesses (*āmarśa*) [and is]

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73 *TĀ* 3.191b-192a:
bhogyaṃ bhoktari līnaṃ ced bhoktā tadvastutaḥ sphuṭaḥ//191//
ataḥ ṣaṇṇāṃ trikaṃ sāraṃ cidiṣyunmeṣaṇātmakam/

74 *TĀ* 3.192b-193a:
tadeva tritayaṃ prāhurbhairavasya paraṃ mahaḥ//192//
tattrikaṃ parameśasya pūrṇā śaktiḥ pragīyate/

75 *TĀ* 3.193b-194a:
tenākṣiptaṃ yato viśvamato'sminsamupāsite//193//
viśvaśaktāvavacchedavandhye jātamupāsanam/

76 *TĀ* 3.194b-195a:
ityeṣa mahimaitāvāniti tāvanna śakyate//194//
aparicchinnaśakteḥ kaḥ kuryācchaktiparicchidām/

precisely one, its self being reflexive awareness (*vimarśa*). The other energies here precisely are grounded.[77]

(197b)

Having 81 *padas*, the Goddess, indeed, will be made to be contained here [in the absolute/the fifty phonemes].[78]

(198a-200a)

[The Mass of Sounds:] In the case of having for its nature one reflexive awareness (*ekāmarśa*), this is the Mass of Sounds (*śabdarāśi*), Bhairava.

[The Creative Sonic Mother:] And, by connection with the shadow (*chāyā*)[79] of the object of reflexive awareness (*āmṛśya*), this precisely is the energy, the Creative Sonic Mother (*mātṛkā*).

[The Phonematic Garland:] And this [Creative Sonic Mother], by banging together with the Mass of Sounds, [becomes] the Phonematic Garland (*mālinī*), whose vulva is open (*bhinnayoni*).[80]

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[77] *TĀ* 3.195b-197a:
tasmādanuttaro devaḥ svācchandyānuttaratvataḥ//195//
visargaśaktiyuktatvātsampanno viśvarūpakaḥ/
evaṃ pañcāśadāmarśapūrṇaśaktirmaheśvaraḥ//196//
vimarśātmaika evānyāḥ śaktayo'traiva niṣṭhatāḥ/

[78] *TĀ* 3.197b:
ekāśītipadā devī hyatrāntarbhāvayiṣyate//197//

[79] One sense of the term *chāyā* connects it to pollution in the Brahmaṇical universe, as pointed out by Gavin D. Flood, "Techniques of Body and Desire in Kashmir Śaivism," *Religion* 22, no. 1 (January 1992): p. 49 (referring to Brunner's work on the *Netratantra*): "In this Brahmanical universe the body was constantly polluted through its effluents, and along with the desire that it contains, needed to be controlled through dispassion (*virāga*) and ritual regulations. Indeed failure to do so might result in possession (*āveśa*) by malevolent forces who would enter into the body through the 'hole' in its shadow (*chāyāccidrena*) created by the impurity caused through ritual neglect." Also, "shadow"-women are rooted in the Vedic literature and are a natural part of the Hindu mythological universe: see Wendy Doniger O'Flaherty, *Women, Androgynes, and Other Mythical Beasts* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1980). David White pointed out this second reference.

[80] *TĀ* 3.198a-200a:
ekāmarśasvabhāvatve śabdarāśiḥ sa bhairavaḥ/

Appendix 3
Translation of TĀ 3.200b-233b: "General Remarks [on the Non-Separation of the Cognitions from the Mantras, Etc.]"

(200b-206a)

In this way, by the penetrating of Sound (*nāda*), having reflexive awareness as his own-nature, Śiva, being the Mother and the Father, abides always and everywhere as the creator.

The Emissional Power (*visarga*), as the Seminal Nucleus (*bindu*) of Śiva, again, having enfolded the endless universe within itself, attains the condition of the Absolute.[81]

That Reflexive Awareness within the natural Self of the Lord, whose internal essence is the indivisible totality, is said to be characterized by the existence of nonduality.[82]

With respect to the nature of the nonduality of Śiva and Śakti, of the Ultimate and the Emissional Power, the Reflexive Awareness of the All-Pervading, because of its super-abundancy, [it] is called "I."[83]

āmṛśyacchāyayā yogāt saiva śaktiś ca mātṛkā//198
sā śabdarāśisaṃghaṭṭād bhinnayonis tu mālinī/
prāgvannavatayāmarśātpṛthaggvargasvarūpiṇī//199//
ekaikāmarśarūḍhau tu saiva pañcāśadātmikā/

[81] *TĀ* 3.200b-202a:
itthaṃ nādānuvedhena parāmarśasvabhāvakaḥ//
śivo mātāpitṛtvena kartā visvatra saṃsthitaḥ/
visarga eva śākto 'yaṃ śivabindutayā punaḥ//
garbhīkṛtānantaviśvaḥ śrayate 'nuttarātmatām/

[82] *TĀ* 3.202b-203a:
aparicchinnaviśvāntaḥsāre svātmani yaḥ prabhoḥ//202//
parāmarśaḥ sa evokto dvayasampattilakṣaṇaḥ/

[83] *TĀ* 3.203b-204a:
anuttaravisargātmaśivaśaktyadvayātmani//203//
parāmarśo nirbharatvād ahamityucyate vibhoḥ/

Beginning with *A*, the flowing, [and] ending with *H*, whose form is energy, hides itself in the Absolute, in which the entire totality is withdrawn.[84]

Therefore this totality abides in the interior of the energy [and] that [energy] [abides within the interior of] the supreme Ultimate [and] that [supreme Ultimate] [abides within the interior of] that [energy]. Such in truth [is] the intertwining by the All-Pervading.[85]

(206b)

In that way, in the glorious *Supreme Triadic Queen*, the encapsulation of the energy [is explained].[86]

(207a-208a)

Precisely in the totality that shines in consciousness, indeed [there is shining] by consciousness; this triad by joining couples peaks as the state of banging together; that is the one precisely, the supreme form of Bhairava, whose nature is I [AHAṂ].[87]

(208b-209a)

The emissional energy of Śambhu thus abides everywhere. Out of it [arises] the collection of the motions of the liquid bliss of joy.[88]

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[84] *TĀ* 3.204b-205a:
anuttarādyā prasṛtir hāntā śaktisvarūpiṇi//204//
pratyāhṛtāśeṣaviśvānuttare sā nilīyate/
[85] *TĀ* 3.205b-206a:
tad idaṃ viśvam antaḥstham śaktau sānuttare pare//205//
tat tasyām iti yat satyaṃ vibhunā saṃputikṛtiḥ/
[86] *TĀ* 3.206b:
tena śrītriśikāśāstre śakteḥ saṃpuṭitākṛtiḥ//206//
[87] *TĀ* 3.207a-208a:
saṃvittau bhāti yadviśvaṃ tatrāpi khalu saṃvidā/
tadetattritayaṃ dvandvayogātsaṃghātatāṃ gatam//207//
ekameva paraṃ rūpaṃ bhairavasyāhamātmakam/
[88] *TĀ* 3.208b-209a:

(209b-210b)

So indeed, when a sweet [song] is sung, when [there is] touching, or when [there is the smelling of] sandalwood and so on, when the state of standing in the middle [the state of indifference] ceases, [there arises] the state of vibrating in the heart, which is called precisely "the energy of bliss," because of which a human being is with-heart.[89]

(211a-214b)

[Three Types of Emission]

The first, the atomic [emission of the individual soul], is called "reposing in consciousness;" everything to be emitted is created in the fire of emptiness.

Then, objects that are seen, heard, and so on, [reach] the state of "raising the face" towards own-consciousness [consciousness of self]; [it is] called "the awakening of consciousness," [and] has the nature of bearing the joyful play of energy.

There, from the banging together of those objects in the state of raising the face, from the development of the object in the heart, from the penetration with fullness, from the dissolution of the limited consciousness into Śiva, [and] from the dissolution of the possible state of being limited coming together as "raising the face" in the future as in the previous case, that is the supreme Śambhu emission, whose name is "the dissolution of consciousness."[90]

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visargaśaktiryā śambhoḥ setthaṃ sarvatra vartate//208//
tata eva samasto 'yamānandarasavibhramaḥ/
[89] *TĀ* 3.209b-210b:
tathāhi madhure gīte sparśe vā candanādike//209//
mādhyasthyavigame yāsau hṛdaye spandamānatā/
ānandaśaktiḥ saivoktā yataḥ sahṛdayo janaḥ//210//
[90] *TĀ* 3.211a-214b:
pūrva visṛjyasakalaṃ kartavyaṃ śūnyatānale/
cittaviśrāntisaṃjño'yamāṇavastadanantaram//211//
dṛṣṭaśrutāditadvastupronmukhatvaṃ svasaṃvidi/

(215a-219b)

In the *Way of Guarding Reality*, in this way the Triple Emission is described:[91] Dwelling in the middle space of the calyx of the lotus of

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cittasaṃbodhanāmoktaḥ śāktollāsabharātmakaḥ//212//
tatronmukhatvatadvastusaṃghaṭṭādvastuno hṛdi/
rūḍheḥ pūrṇatayāveśānmitacittalayācchive//213//
prāgvadbhaviṣyadaunmukhyasaṃbhāvyamitatālayāt/
cittapralayanāmāsau visargaḥ śāmbhavaḥ paraḥ//214//
[91] *TĀ* 3.215a:
tattvarakṣāvidhāne'to visargatraidhamucyate/
[92] *TĀ* 3.215b-219b:
hṛtpadmakośamadhyasthastayoḥ saṃghaṭṭa iṣyate//215//
visargo'ntaḥ sa ca proktaścittaviśrāntilakṣaṇaḥ/
dvitīyaḥ sa visargastu cittasaṃbodhalakṣaṇaḥ//216//
ekībhūtaṃ vibhātyatra jagadetaccarācaram/
grāhyagrāhakabhedo vai kiṃcidatreśyate yadā//217//
tadāsau sakalaḥ prokto niṣkalaḥ śivayogataḥ/
grāhyagrāhakavicchittissaṃpūrṇagrahaṇātmakaḥ//218//
tṛtīyaḥ sa visargastu cittapralayalakṣaṇaḥ/
ekībhāvātmakaḥ sūkṣmo vijñānātmātmanirvṛtaḥ//219//
[93] sātra kuṇḍalinī bījaṃ jīvabhutā cidātmikā//220//
tajjaṃ dhruvecchonmeṣāravyaṃ trikaṃ varṇāstataḥ punaḥ/
ā ityavarṇādityādiyāvadvaisargikī kalā//221//
kakārādisakārāntā visargātpañcadhā sa ca/
bahiścāntaśca hṛdaye nāde'tha parame pade//222//
bindurātmani mūrdhāntaṃ hṛdayādvyāpako hi saḥ/
ādimāntyavihīnāstu mantrāḥ syuḥ śaradabhravat//223//
gurorlakṣaṇametaāvadādimāntyaṃ ca vedayet/
pūjyaḥ so'hamiva jñānī bhairavo devatātmakaḥ//224//
ślokagāthādi yatkiṃcidādimāntyayutaṃ tataḥ/

the heart, the banging together of the two is prescribed, and that is called "the final emission," characterized by resting in consciousness. Now the second emission [is] characterized by the awakening of consciousness; here the totality [of all things] moving and nonmoving shines forth [as] having become one. Here [in the second emission], when the division of recognized and recognizer is slightly held, then that [state] is described as "with parts." In being joined in Śiva, [it is described as] "without parts." Finally, the third emission has the nature of overflowing recognition in the the breaking asunder of the split between recognize and recognized; it is characterized by the dissolution of consciousness, consisting of the nature of being one, subtle, having the self extinguished in the self of knowing consciousness.[92]

(220a-225b)

This sense has been expounded in the glorious *Doctrine of the Lord Yogin of Power*: "The Kuṇḍalinī here is the seed, endowed with the principle of life, whose self is consciousness. Arising from that, known as Immovable [the phoneme A], Will [the phoneme I], and Unfolding [the phoneme U], is the Triad. The [other] phonemes [arise] from that in turn. "*Ā*" [arises] from the *A*-phoneme, and so on in this way up to the emissional aspect. From the emission, [there arises the other phonemes] beginning with *K* and ending with *S*. And that [emission] is five-fold: outside, inside, in the heart, in the primordial sound, and in the supreme abode. For the bindu, pervading, in the whole body, from heart to head, is that [emission]. Further, if mantra-s were devoid of the first and the last [phonemes], [they would be] like the clouds of autumn [not able to do anything]. In addition, one should know that the first and last of such kind [the consciousness of the first and last phonemes] is the characteristic of the guru. That one who is to be worshipped, like the "I," is the knower, Bhairava, made of divinities. Then whatever strophe, stanza, and so on, is united to the first and last, therefore, knowing, he sees all in that way as nothing other than mantra."[93]

(226a-231b)

The energy of emission as the cause of the totality is discussed in detail in the *Aitareyāraṇyaka* by the Supreme Lord.[94]

Fire is red [blood]; the body of sun and moon is the vitality [semen]. "A," the Supreme Brahman, rises from the banging together of those.[95]

Also, the supreme vitality of that [Brahman] has the nature of the five elements, whose form is food that is to be enjoyed, and whose nature is sound, touch, and taste.[96] Also, from the sweet sound there is the accumulating of vitality. The vitality indeed is understood as supreme and pure, and as whose nature is the desire to emit.[97] That [vitality] is the strength, the might, the breaths of life, and the beauty.[98] From that [vitality] those offsprings are said to be vitality in action, sacrifice and so on; moreover that [vitality] [is] in the rain, in the field of plants; then again those [are] in the vitality and that [is] in the offsprings.

Thus, in the emission, [there exists] the state of having the body of the totality.[99]

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[94] *TĀ* 3.226a-226b:
visargaśaktirviśvasya kāraṇaṃ ca nirūpitā/
aitareyākhyavedānte parameśena vistarāt//226//
[95] *TĀ* 3.227a-227b:
yallohitaṃ tadagniryadvīryaṃ sūryenduvigraham/
a iti brahma paramaṃ tatsaṃghaṭṭodayātmakam//227//
[96] *TĀ* 3.228a-228b:
tasyāpi ca paraṃ vīrya pañcabhūtakalātmakam/
bhogyatvenānnarūpaṃ ca śabdasparśarasātmakam//228//
(read vīrya as vīryaṃ)
[97] *TĀ* 3.229a-229b:
śabdo'pi madhuro yasmādvīryopacayakārakaḥ/
taddhi vīryaṃ paraṃ śuddhaṃ visisṛkṣātmakaṃ matam//229//
[98] *TĀ* 3.230a:
tadbalaṃ ca tadojaśca te prāṇāḥ sā ca kāntatā/
[99] *TĀ* 3.230b-231b:
tasmādvīryātprajāstāśca vīrya karmasu kathyate//230//
yajñādikeṣu tadvṛṣṭau sauṣadhiṣvatha tāḥ punaḥ/
vīrye tacca prajāsvevaṃ visarge viśvarūpatā//231//

(232a-233b)

That [Emission] precisely is called the "Mass of Sounds" and [she is also] known as the "Creative Sonic Mother;" from the penetration into the Agitated by the Agitator, she is understood to be the "Phonematic Garland."

Beautiful in arising from the emission of the coming together of seed and *yoni,* the Phonematic Garland precisely is understood as the Supreme Energy, whose body is the Totality.[100]

Appendix 4
Translation of TĀ 3.234a-267b: "The Seeing Voice, the Middle Voice, and the Corporeal Voice"

(234a-236b)

This [the Phonematic Garland (*mālinī*)] [is] in reality the One precisely, Supreme, Attractress of Time.

Through yoking with the Power-Wielder [Bhairava], the state of the Couple (*yāmala*) is reached.

The Reflexive Awareness of that [Couple], which is completely full, whose nature is the "I," within its own-self, because of its freedom, manifests diversity.

And in the illuminating of diversity, its body is said to be threefold, called "Seeing," "Middle," and the "Gross Corporeal."[101]

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[100] *TĀ* 3.233a-233b
bījayonisamāpattivisargodayasundarā/
mālinī hi parā śaktirnirṇitā viśvarūpiṇī//233//
[101] *TĀ* 3.234a-236b:
eṣā vastuta ekaiva parā kālasya karṣiṇī/
śaktiśaktimadyogena yāmalatvaṃ prapadyate//234//
tasya pratyavamarśo yaḥ paripūrṇo'hamatmakaḥ/

(237a-241a)

Further, the form of [each of] these [three voices] is threefold; these are gross, subtle, and supreme. With respect to them, what is a beautiful collection of sounds, whose form is resonating, indeed that is the gross Seeing [voice], without division of phonemes, and so on.[102]

The uniform state, without division, that is called "energy of sweetness;" and the full state of manifestation, arising from the rubbing of sound organ, breath, and so on, is harsh. Then, regarding the one with the resonating form, as a mode of being that is near to consciousness, [for the one] possessing within an equality [with that sound], instantly the state of identity with that [consciousness] is obtained.[103]

For those not having identity with that, not knowing immersion of the body and so on, but knowing an immersed consciousness, they are "without heart."[104]

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sa svātmani svatantratvādvibhāgamavabhāsayet//235//
vibhāgābhāsane cāsya tridhā vapurudāhṛtam/
paśyantī madhyamā sthūlā vaikharītyabhiśabdatam//236//
I read śaktiśaktimadyogena for śaktimadbhedayogena, following Sanderson, "Visualization," p. 45.

[102] *TĀ* 3.237a-238a:
tāsāmapi tridhā rūpaṃ sthūlasūkṣmaparatvataḥ/
tatra yā svarasandarbhasubhagā nādarūpiṇī//237//
sā sthūlā khalu paśyantī varṇādyapravibhāgataḥ/

[103] *TĀ* 3.238b-240a:
avibhāgaikarūpatvaṃ mādhuryaṃ śaktirucyate//238//
sthānavāyvādigharṣotthā sphuṭataiva ca pāruṣī/
tadasyāṃ nādarūpāyāṃ saṃvitsavidhavṛttitaḥ//239//
sājātyāntarma(ttanma)yībhūtirjhagityevopalabhyate/

[104] *TĀ* 3.240b-241a:
yeṣāṃ na tanmayībhūtiste dehādinimajjanam//240//
avidanto magnasaṃvinmānāstvahṛdayā(ḥ) iti/

(241b-242a)

On the other hand, the sound from some drum or other, and so on, that is the gross Middling, because it is the state of having the form of manifest and unmanifest.[105]

(242b-243a)

And, in the Middling, there exists an aspect of non-separation; thus, there is attraction. As it consists of sounds of non-separation, it is the lovely attractor.[106]

(243b-244a)

Nonseparation, indeed, is seen to be for the purpose of complete satisfaction; indeed, in accordance with repeating musical time [rhythmic modulations], one is completely satisfied with the playing of music, having unmanifest sound.[107]

(244b-245a)

And the cause of the arising of the manifest phonemes is gross articulate speech; it creates words and so on to a high degree.[108]

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[105] *TĀ* 3.241b-242a:
yattucarmāvanaddhādi kiṃcittatraiṣa yo dhvaniḥ//241//
sa sphuṭāsphuṭarūpatvānmadhyamā sthūlarūpiṇī/
[106] *TĀ* 3.242b-243a:
madhyāyāścāvibhāgāṃśasadbhāva iti raktatā//242//
avibhāgasvaramayī yatra syāttatsurañjakam/
[107] *TĀ* 3.243b-244a:
avibhāgo hi nirvṛtyai dṛśyatāṃ tālapāṭhataḥ//243//
kilāvyaktadhvanau tasminvādane parituṣyati/
[108] *TĀ* 3.244b-245a:
yā tu sphuṭānām varṇānāmutpattau kāraṇaṃ bhavet//244//
sā sthulā vaikharī yasyāḥ kāryaṃ vākyādi bhūyasā/

(245b-246a)

In the threefold gross [form], what is a "setting into order" [an intention] at the beginning of each one [of the three, Supreme, Middling and Corporeal in their gross forms], that is the triad called "subtle."[109]

(246b)

[The three intentions are:] "I make the sound of the peacock;" "I play a sweet [sound];" [and] "I say a word."[110]

(247a-248a)

The threefold "setting into order" [intention] is indeed made known one by one; also the beginning of this threefold [set of intentions], the form of which is without limitation, that is the supreme triad, there Śiva [dwells], whose nature is supreme consciousness.[111]

(248b-249b)

And here, the three principle energies, illuminating the differentiation, are the Ultimate, which is the Supreme; and the Will, which is the Supreme-Non-Supreme; and the Opening energy, whose name is also "Knowledge," called "Non-Supreme."[112]

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[109] *TĀ* 3.245b-246a:
asminsthūlatraye yattadanusandhānamādivat//245//
pṛthakpṛthaktattritayaṃ sūkṣmamityabhiśabdyate/
[110] *TĀ* 3.246b:
ṣaḍjaṃ karomi madhuraṃ vādayāmi bruve vacaḥ//246//
[111] *TĀ* 3.247a-248a:
pṛthagevānusandhānatrayaṃ saṃvedyate kila/
etasyāpi trayasyādyaṃ yadrūpamanupādhimat//247//
tatparaṃ tritayaṃ tatra śivaḥ paracidātmakaḥ/
[112] *TĀ* 3.248b-249b:
vibhāgābhāsanāyāṃ ca mukhyāstisro'tra śaktayaḥ//248//
anuttarā parecchā ca parāparatayā sthitā/
unmeṣaśaktirjñānākhyā tvapareti nigadyate//249//

(250a)

Further, out of these, from being agitated, [there arise] the previously mentioned six immaculate consciousnesses.[113]

(250b-253a)

Because of the interprenetration, risen as the energy of action, of these [energies], [there arises] the twelve consciousnesses, [previously] taught, in which all is obtained. All of those [twelve energies] are the pre-eminent wheel of energies of the God of Gods; by means of such, the God of Gods, full of energies, is Bhairava. Because of [1] having reflexive awareness as their nature, because of either [2] drawing away or [3] emission, because of the [4] calculation of a quantity, [and] because of [5] knowledge, these [twelve energies] are in some [scriptures] called "Kālikās."[114]

(253b-257a)

And also in the glorious *Essence of Trika* it is said that in the middle one should worship the supreme single syllable, whose name is the "Bhairava-Self," surrounded by twelve *yoginīs*. From these precisely [the twelve *yoginīs*], [there arises] a wheel of energies extending to sixty-four
[spokes]; beginning from one spoke, [a wheel of] one thousand [spokes] is arisen. Assigned to these, there are many names in scripture, as there are different tasks to be done; and rites of worship are in accordance with duality, nonduality, or mixed. In the glorious *Three-Headed*

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[113] *TĀ* 3.250a:
kṣobharūpātpunastāsāmuktāḥ ṣaṭ saṃvido'malāḥ/
[114] *TĀ* 3.250b-253a:
āsāmeva samāveśātkriyāśaktitayoditāt//250//
saṃvido dvādaśa proktā yāsu sarvaṃ samāpyate/
etāvaddevadevasya mukhyaṃ tacchakticakrakam//251//
etāvatā devadevaḥ pūrṇaśaktiḥ sa bhairavaḥ/
parāmarśātmakatvena visargākṣepayogataḥ//252//
iyattākalanājjñānāttāḥ proktāḥ kālikāḥ kvacit/

Bhairava Tantra this is expounded in great detail but it is not written here out of fear of diffusion and because it is useless [to do so here].[115]

(257b-259a)

These [energies] precisely, immaculate and pure, are called the "Non-Terribles;" and yet by engendering the "Terribles" and the "More-Terribles," they have the nature of those.[116]

(259b-260a)

The form of what goes beyond limitations is understood by the teachers in two ways: from the the non-arising of limitations or else from the cessation [of limitations].[117]

(260b-261a)

And the cessation is twofold: by means of tranquility and by a method of violent cooking, described as wanting to quickly devour, whose nature is a continually radiant blaze.[118]

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115 *TĀ* 3.253b-257a:
śrisāraśastre cāpyuktaṃ madhya ekākṣarāṃ parām//253//
pūjayed bhairavātmākhyāṃ yoginīdvādaśāvṛtām/
tābhya eva catuḥṣaṣṭiparyantaṃ śakticakrakam//254//
ekārataḥ samārabhya sahasrāraṃ pravartate/
tāsāṃ ca kṛtyabhedena nāmāni bahudhāgame//255//
upāsāśca dvayādvaitavyāmiśrākārayogataḥ/
śrimattraiśirase tacca kathitaṃ vistarādbahu//256//
iha no likhitaṃ vyāsabhayāccānupayogataḥ/
116 *TĀ* 3.257b-259a:tā eva nirmalāḥ śuddhā aghorāḥ parikīrtitāḥ//257//
ghoraghoratarāṇāṃ tusotṛtvācca tadātmikāḥ/
sṛṣṭau sthitau ca saṃhāre tadupādhitrayātyaye//258//
tāsāmeva sthtitaṃ rūpaṃ bahudhā pravibhajyate/
117 *TĀ* 3.259b-260a
upādhyatītaṃ yadrūpaṃ tad dvidhā guravo jaguḥ//259//
anullāsādupādhīnāṃ yadvā praśamayogataḥ/
118 *TĀ* 3.260b-261a:
praśamaśca dvidhā śāntyā haṭhapākakrameṇa tu//260//
alaṃgrāsarasākhyena satataṃ jvalanātmanā/
119 *TĀ* 3.261b-261c:

(261b-261c)

Further, the cessation through violent cooking, which is the third, that precisely should be used for the purpose of teaching; [it is] the one that burns up the fuel of differentiation.[119]

(262a-262b)

Into the oblation-eating belly of one's own consciousness, all existing things are hurled violently; they sacrifice their portion of differentiation, consuming it by fire with their own energy.[120]

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haṭhapākapraśamanaṃ yattṛtīyaṃ tadeva ca/
upadeśāya yujyeta bhedendhanavidāhakam//261//
[120] *TĀ* 3.262a-262b:
nijabodhajaṭharahutabhuji bhāvāḥ sarve samarpitā haṭhataḥ/
vijahati bhedavibhāgaṃ nijaśaktyā taṃ samindhānāḥ//262//
[121] *TĀ* 3.263a-263b:
haṭhapākena bhāvānāṃ rūpe bhinne vilāpite/
aśnantyamṛtasādbhūtaṃ viśvaṃ saṃvittidevatāḥ//263//
[122] *TĀ* 3.264a-264b:
tāstṛptāḥ svātmanaḥ pūrṇa hṛdayaikāntaśāyinam/
cidvyomabhairavaṃ devamabhedenādhiśerate//264//
[123] *TĀ* 3.265a-265b:
evaṃ kṛtyakriyāveśānnāmopāsābahutvataḥ/
āsāṃ bahuvidhaṃ rūpamabhede'pyavabhāsate//265//
[124] *TĀ* 3.266a-3.267a:
āsāmeva ca devīnāmāvāpodvāpayogataḥ/

(263a-263b)

When the fragmentation of existing things is dissolved by [this] violent cooking, the deities of consciousness [the senses] eat the universe that has become the nectar of immortality [the "I"].[121]

(264a-264b)

These [deities] now satisfied, they lie down with God, no different from [Him] who is Bhairava, the Sky of Consciousness, dwelling in the secret space of the full heart of their selves.[122]

(265a-265b)

Thus, from immersion in the proper rite, indeed, in accordance with the multitude of rites of worship, the manifold form [of these energies], even in identity [the absence of differentiation], manifests.[123]

(266a-266b)

And in accordance with concealing or revealing, [there is the manifestion in manifold forms] of these goddesses precisely, as one, two, three, four, five, six, seven, eight, nine, and higher.[124]

(267b)

Let us cease from this other talk; to the original topic again [our attention] is directed.[125]

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[125] *TĀ* 3.267b:
alamanyena bahunā prakṛte'tha niyujyate//267//

Appendix 5
Translation of TĀ 3.268a-293b and closing lines: "Conclusion: The Totality is a Reflected Image in the Mirror of Consciousness"

(268a-270b)

> He in whose consciousness, this Totality, the array of things full of diversity, appears as a reflection, that one indeed is the Lord of the Totality. In this way, he in whose self there is such nondualistic, always-arising, Reflexive Awareness, is precisely this one sealed by the way towards realization of Śambhu. This which is the full "I"-Consciousness, the Reflexive Awareness of this one has been examined. Other than that, not one, of those [amongst] *mantras, mudrās,* religious rituals, and worship, [is to be examined] here.[126]

(271a-273b)

> Having connected over and over with this immersion of nondifferentiation, one reaches the state of Bhairava, understood as no other than liberation-in-life. Precisely from this time on, this liberation-in-life is considered [as a state] wherein, indeed by means of arranging, [there is] the creating of goal and means. However in the previous chapter [TĀ 2] there is never at any time any creating of duality in the mind. Then in the nonmeans who is liberated? How? From where?[127]

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[126] *TĀ* 3.268a-270b:
saṃvidātmani viśvo'yaṃ bhāvavargaḥ prapañcavān/
pratibimbatayā bhāti yasya viśveśvaro hi saḥ//268//
evamātmani yasyedṛgavikalpaḥ sadodayaḥ/
parāmarśaḥ sa evāsau śāṃbhavopāyamudritaḥ//269//
pūrṇāhantāparāmarśo yo'syāyaṃ pravivecitaḥ/
mantramudrākriyopāsāstadanyā nātra kāścana//270//
[127] *TĀ* 3.271a-273b:
bhūyobhūyaḥ samāveśaṃ nirvikalpamimaṃ śritaḥ
abhyeti bhairavībhāvaṃ jīvanmuktyaparābhidham//271//
ita eva prabhṛtyeṣā jīvanmuktirvicāryate/
yatra sūtraṇayāpiyamupāyopeyakalpanā//272//
prāktane tvāhnike kācidbhedasya kalanāpi/
tenānupāye tasminko mucyate vā kathaṃ kutaḥ//273//

(274b-279b)

In this non-discursive reflexive awareness, called "the way towards realization of Shambhu," the sage should apply the fifty divisions, previously described.

Seeing the very earth [principle] reflected non-discursively within his own-self, he becomes Bhairava.

This process [is applied] also to the water [principle], and so on, up to the end [when] the supreme principle, transcending all obstructions, pervading, free, all-knowing, which is Śiva, is created [within one's own-self].

Also seeing this reflected in the mirror of unfabricated and illustrious consciousness, the differentiated and imperfect thought spontaneously is transformed into Bhairava.

Just as seeing in front the color red, by means of a non-discursive consciousness, by various means, one is well-established in a unitary knowledge, without parts, of a pot, in the same way, reflexively knowing the own-self, in accordance with the totality of the union of every single [principle], earth and so on, one shines forth in complete fullness.[128]

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[128] *TĀ* 3.274a-279b:
nirvikalpe parāmarśe śāmbhavopāyanāmani/
pañcāśadbhedatāṃ pūrvasūtritāṃ yojayedbudhaḥ//274//
dharāmevāvikalpena svātmani pratibimbitām/
paśyanbhairavatāṃ yāti jalādiṣvapyayaṃ vidhiḥ//275//
yāvadante paraṃ tattvaṃ samastāvaraṇordhvagam/
vyāpi svatantraṃ sarvajñaṃ yacchivaṃ parikalpitam//276//
tadapyakalpitodārasaṃviddarpaṇabimbitam/
paśyanvikalpavikalo bhairavībhavati svayam//277//
yathā raktaṃ puraḥ paśyannirvikalpakasaṃvidā/
tattaddvāraniraṃśaikaghaṭasaṃvittisusthitaḥ//278//
tadvaddharādikaikaikasaṃghātasamudāyataḥ/
parāmṛśansvamātmānaṃ pūrṇa evāvabhāsate//279//

(280a-281b)

"This [totality] is risen from me, is reflected in me, and is no different from me." The Śambhu Way is threefold;[129] such is the act of the gathering of creation, maintenance, and destruction. "Where it is established and from what [source it arises]," such is said in the Vibration teachings.[130]

(282a-282b)

By such very measure indeed, the sovereignty of consciousness and the supreme state of consisting of the totality is declared. So what other characteristic at all may be spoken about?[131]

(283a-286b)

"In my very self, in the sky of consciousness, illuminating the universe, I am the creator, whose nature is the universe!" For one who proclaims such, the Bhairava-state [is attained]. "The entire aggregate of the six paths is truly mirrored within me. I am the maintainer!" [When] such has become apparent, this is the state of being transformed into the universe. "The universe dissolves in me, crested by the flames of the ever-risen Great Consciousness!" Seeing such one is pacified. "I am Śiva precisely, who burns down the sacrificial house of the dream cycle, wherein dwells infinite and manifold existence." Thus, the oblation-eater trembles.[132]

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[129] *TĀ* 3.280a-280b:
matta evoditamidaṃ mayyeva pratibimbitam/
madabhinnamidaṃ ceti tridhopāyaḥ sa śāmbhavaḥ//270//
[130] *TĀ* 3.281a-281b:
sṛṣṭeḥ sthiteḥ saṃhṛteśca tadetatsūtraṇaṃ kṛtam/
yatra sthitaṃ yataśceti tadāha spandaśāsane//281//
[131] *TĀ* 3.282a-282b:
etāvataiva hyaiśvarya saṃvidaḥ khyāpitaṃ param/
viśvātmakatvaṃ cetyanyallakṣaṇaṃ kiṃ nu kathyatām//282//
[132] *TĀ* 3.283a-286b:
svātmanyeva cidākāśe viśvamasmyavabhāsayan/
sraṣṭā viśvātmaka iti prathayā bhairavātmatā//283//
ṣaḍadhvajātaṃ nikhilaṃ mayyeva pratibimbitam/

(287a-287b)

The entire world, in its great variety, arises out of Me; and likewise [the universe becomes fully] grown in Me; and then when dissolved, here there is no more. Therefore in this way, [the one] who would see, through the unification of creation, maintenance, and dissolution, [the totality] as without parts, that one indeed trembles; he has attained the fourth state.[133]

(288a-288b)

Now only certain ones purified by the Supreme Lord rely on this supreme means that grasps the Śāmbhavic nonduality.[134]

(289a-290a)

Any performing [of practices] with differentiation, [such as] bathing, vow, purification of the body, concentration, use of mantra, creation of the path, rite of sacrifice, oblation, prayer, contemplation, and so on, is not to be used here.[135]

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shtitikartāhamasmiti sphuṭeyaṃ viśvarūpatā//284//
sadoditamahābodhajvālājaṭilatātmani/
viśvaṃ dravati mayyetaditi paśyanpraśāmyati//285//
anantacitrasadgarbhasaṃsārasvapnasadmanaḥ/
ploṣakaḥ śiva evāhamityullāsī hutāśanaḥ//286//

[133] *TĀ* 3.287a-287b:
jagatsarvaṃ mattaḥ prabhavati vibhedena bahudhā tathāpyetadrūḍhaṃ mayi vigalite tvatra na paraḥ/
taditthaṃ yaḥ sṛṣṭisthitivilayamekīkṛtivaśādanaṃśaṃ paśyetsa sphurati hi turīyaṃ padamitaḥ//287//

[134] *TĀ* 3.288a-288b:
tadasminparamopāye śāmbhavādvaitaśālini/
ke'pyeva yānti viśvāsaṃ parameśena bhāvitāḥ//288//

[135] *TĀ* 3.289a-291a:
snānaṃ vrataṃ dehaśuddhirdhāraṇā mantrayojanā/
adhvakḷptiryāgavidhirhomajapyasamādhayaḥ//289//
ityādikalpanā kāpi nātra bhedena yujyate/

(290b-292b)

For one [a disciple] situated [qualified] in this, there clearly exists the state of [a master] showing favor to another. However, in the case that one would not be so [qualified] and [yet] purified by devotion to Śiva and inspired by [receiving] such blessing in the future, he strives to obtain favor from that one [the master], then the experienced [master] would want to bestow the various rites of initiation and so on.[136]

(293a-293b and closing lines)

Future rites of worship indeed become perfect in this [Śambhu way]. The supreme attainment, Śiva, is the state that consists of that [Śambhu way]. Thus knowing the supreme Śāmbhavic Self has been expounded.[137]

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136 *TĀ* 290b-292b:
parānugrahakāritvamatrasthasya sphuṭaṃ shtitam//290//
yadi tādṛganugrāhyo daiśikasyopasarpati/
athāsau tādṛśo na syādbhavabhaktyā ca bhāvitaḥ//291//
taṃ cārādhayate bhāvitādṛśānugraheritaḥ/
tadā vicitraṃ dikṣādividhiṃ śikṣeta kovidaḥ//292//
(I am reading "kovidaḥ" for "koṃvidaḥ.")
137 *TĀ* 293a-293b and closing lines:
bhāvinyo'pi hyupāsāstā atraivāyānti niṣṭhitim/
etanmayatvaṃ paramaṃ prāpyaṃ nirvarṇyate śivam//293//
iti kathitamidaṃ suvistaraṃ paramaṃ śāmbhavamātmavedanam//

Chapter III
Reflexive Awareness and the Śakti Way towards Realization
(*Vimarśa* in *Tantrāloka* 4)

This chapter discusses AG's use of *mṛś* terms in three sections found in chapter 4 of the *TĀ*, entitled "The Śakti Way towards Realization" (*śāktopāya*). The three sections are: the purification of differentiated thinking (*vikalpasaṃskriyā*) (*TĀ* 4.2a-12b; pp. 618-627); artificial worship as nonessential (*kalpitārcādyanādaraḥ*) (*TĀ* 4.109b-122a; pp. 730-740); and the vitality of *mantra* (*mantravīryam*) (*TĀ* 4.181b-193b; pp. 827-842).

Purification of Differentiated Thinking

In his *Tantroccaya*, Abhinavagupta precisely defines the "Śakti Way towards Realization":[1]

> Even for one whose absorption (*samāveśa*)[2] without differentiated thinking does not arise, that one, by means of the thought with differentiation, which consists of good reasoning, purifies (*saṃskurute*) differentiated thinking (*vikalpa*).[3]

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[1] On the Śakti way, see also SenSharma, *Philosphy*, pp. 125-135; Dyczkowski, *Doctrine*, pp. 173 and 189-204; Dyczkowski, *Stanzas*, pp. 270-1; Padoux, *Vāc*, p. 419; Flood, *Body and Cosmology*, pp. 251-4; David Peter Lawrence, "Argument and the Recognition of Śiva: The Philosophical Theology of Utpaladeva and Abhinavagupta," Ph.D. diss., University of Chicago, 1992, pp. 87-98. On Abhinavagupta connecting the *Śāktopāya* with *IPK* 4.12: see Torella, *IPK*, pp. XXXIX-XXXX and note 61; and Lawrence, "Argument and Recognition," pp. 97-8.

[2] The term *samāveśa* in the context of cremation-grounds tantra means "possession."

[3] *Tantroccaya*, p. 165:
yasya tv ittham apy avikalpakaḥ samāveśo nodeti sa savikalpabhāvanayā sattarkarūpayā

Thus the first section in *TĀ* 4 is a discussion of the purification of differentiated thinking (*vikalpasaṃskriyā*); and insofar as this may be equated with the Śakti means of realization, this section is an overview of the Śakti means. Simply put, discursive thinking is used in order to reach a state of nondiscursive thinking, a notion possibly already present in Krama.[4] Such purification takes place in stages, from obscurity to perfect clarity. Abhinavagupta describes this process of purification in the *TS*:

> Regarding that [the Śakti way towards realization], when one purifies differentiated thinking by degrees for the purpose of entering into the [divine] true nature, just described, then contemplation by degrees, accompanied with authentic reasoning, authentic revelation, and teachings by an authentic master, is useful. For instance, precisely by the force of differentiated thinking, human beings think that the self is fettered. That thought is the cause of continued cyclic existence. From this, [another] dualistic thought arises, its form being the opposite [of the first thought]; it bursts the differentiated thinking that is the cause of cyclic existence. In this way, it is the cause of an awakening.[5]

Thus Abhinavagupta anticipates this question: when awakening involves the absence of mental constructs, how could the use of mental constructs lead to such awakening? Already recognized in the Upaniṣads,[6] this is a

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saṃskurute vikalpam

[4] See Pandey, *Abhinavagupta*, pp. 463 and 534.

[5] *TS* 4, p. 21:
tatra yadā vikalpaṃ krameṇa saṃskurute samanantaroktasvarūpapraveśāya, tadā bhāvanākramasya sattarkasadāgamasadgurūpadeśapūrvakasya asti upayogaḥ/ tathāhi—vikalpabalāt eva jantavo baddham ātmānam abhimanyante, sa abhimānaḥ saṃsārapratibandhahetuḥ, ataḥ pratidvandvirūpo vikalpa uditaḥ saṃsārahetuṃ vikalpaṃ dalayati iti abhyudayahetuḥ/

[6] One thinks here for example of the passage, "The [world] that was not made is not [won] by what is done: *Muṇḍaka Upaniṣad* 1.2.12: translated in Robert E. Hume, *The Thirteen Principal Upanishads*, 2nd ed. (London: Oxford University Press, 1931; reprint, 1975), p. 369.

specific case of the problem of attaining some type of nonduality through dualistic means. AG's answer is clear; insofar as a positive differentiated thought may cancel out a negative differentiated thought, burst the bubble of discursive thinking, it lays the groundwork for non-differentiated thinking to arise. I will discuss this further below.

The Various Stages of Purification (TĀ 4.2a-5b)

To penetrate back into the divine requires purifying one's differentiated thinking. AG delineates various stages in this process; purification at one level generates thinking at the next level. These levels include "not clear," "about to become clear," "in the process of becoming more clear," and "actually being clear." Any one of these stages may be further subdivided. The main point is that the practitioner must purify his thinking, so that beginning with completely obscure thinking he arrives at pure thinking. Pure thinking is to be aware of the ground of one's thinking, pure consciousness itself, in all of one's thinking.[7] AG writes:

> Those wishing to enter into this nature of the Supreme Lord, about which it has been spoken in the previous chapter [chapter 1][8] should immediately purify their differentiated thought. Differentiated thought, having been purified [in the first stage of this process],

[7] See Dyczkowski, *Stanzas*, p. 271 (at n. 9) in reference to *TĀ* 4.2a-7b.

[8] Noted by Navjivan Rastogi, *Introduction to the Tantraloka: A Study in Structure* (Delhi: Motialal Banarsidass, 1987), p. 197, n. 4.

> generates [another] differentiated thought; that also [having been purified generates another differentiated thought]; that also another; [and] that also another, whose form is similar [yet more purified]. With respect to these four differentiated thoughts, the [levels of] purification are, in order: not clear, about to become clear, in the process of becoming more clear, and actually being clear. Then the very clear finally becomes the most clear. Further, in [any one] differentiated thought, beginning with not clear, there is also a division of an intermediate stage.[9]

This definition of pure thinking is very important as it will allow AG to reinterpret various practices such as yoga, worship, and *mantra*-practice in nondualistic terms as I will discuss below. What he will show is that these various practices may be practiced in thought alone, in such a way that one's thought becomes purified to the extent of obliterating any traces of dualistic thinking.

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[9] *TĀ* 4.2a-5b:
anantarâhnikokte'sminsvabhâve pārameśvare/
pravivikṣurvikalpasya kuryātsaṃskāramañjasā//2//
vikalpaḥ saṃskṛtaḥ sūte vikalpaṃ so'pi so'pyanyaṃ/
so'pyanyaṃ sadṛśātmakam//3//
caturṣveva vikalpeṣu yaḥ saṃskāraḥ kramādasau/
asphuṭaḥ sphuṭatābhāvī prasphuṭansphuṭitātmakaḥ//4//
tataḥ sphuṭataro yāvadante sphuṭatamo bhavet/
asphuṭādau vikalpe ca bhedo'pyastyāntarālikaḥ//5//

The Arising of the Bhairava-Splendor (*TĀ* 4.6a-7b)[10]

Abhinavagupta writes:

> Therefore, strengthened by that which is thus formed as excellent and most clear, it attains a natural form which is immaculate and non-differentiated.[11] And from this [cause], that Bhairava-Splendor, whose own-nature is consciousness, becomes manifest; it arises in those reflecting (*vimṛśatāṃ*) more and more.[12]

Differentiated thinking becomes strengthened by pure consciousness and eventually attains the form of pure non-differentiated thinking. In this way the consciousness known as "Bhairava-Splendor" appears, arising in whomever continually reflects on it.

The Bhairava-Splendor, Pure Consciousness, appears to those who allow consciousness to turn back on itself. In other words, they use their consciousness to reflect on and become aware of pure consciousness.

Jayaratha explains that the more the practitioner purifies his differentiated consciousness, the more pure non-differentiated consciousness is able to shine through. Bhairava-Consciousness is to be understood as the true "I," with two aspects, knowledge and action. Jayaratha also reiterates that the transformation occurs in stages for those able to sustain continued reflection on pure consciousness. Again the goal

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[10] References to *mṛś* terms: Abhinavagupta, 4.7b: *vimṛśatā;* Jayaratha, p. 623, l. 16: *parāmṛśatā.*

[11] *TĀ* 4.6a-6b:
tataḥ sphuṭatamodāratādrūpyaparivṛṃhitā/
saṃvidabhyeti vimalāmavikalpasvarūpatām//6//

[12] *TĀ* 4.7a-7b:
ataśca bhairavīyaṃ yattejaḥ saṃvitsvabhāvakam/
bhūyo bhūyo vimṛśatāṃ jāyate tatsphuṭātmatā//

is to transform obscure differentiated thinking into clear non-differentiated thinking.

> From this, that is, from the cause, from the force of the various purifications of differentiated consciousness precisely, [which is] the appearing by the form of non-differentiated consciousness, which is of Bhairava, known as "knowledge" and "action," whose true nature is consciousness, that very form [of Bhairava], the "I," more and more [of it], in stages beginning with un-manifest and so on, as ending in the transforming into the rising state of more manifest and so on, to those reflecting, to those for whom there is intense descent of energy, to those having a great nature, the manifest nature of that object of reflection, consisting of consciousness, splendor, arises--by force of entering into the divine, there is an intuitive glimpse of that [true nature]. Such is the meaning.[13]

AG's verses are significant then in that AG applies the notion of reflexive awareness to both Bhairava and the individual. The practitioner who is able to use this aspect of consciousness is someone who has been graced by a descent of Śakti; this happens either spontaneously without any mediation, or through the mediation of a guru. One applies reflexive awareness to consciousness itself; in other words consciousness becomes an object to itself, or, again, consciousness turns back on itself. According to AG, the manifestation of Bhairava-Splendor then is precisely a glimpse of one's own authentic nature as one penetrates back into the divine.

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[13] *TĀV*, comm. on 4.7a-7b, pp. 623-4:
ato--vikalpasaṃvida eva tattatsaṃskārabalādavikalpasaṃvidrūpatayā parisphuraṇāddhetoḥ, yadbhairavīyaṃ jñānakriyākhyaṃ saṃvitsvabhāvaṃ tejaḥ tadrūpa eva 'ahamiti' bhuyo bhuyaḥ asphuṭatvādikrameṇa udgacchatsphuṭatamatvādyāpattiparyantena parā*mṛś*atāṃ tīvratīvraśaktipātavatāṃ mahātmanāṃ, tasya parā*mṛś*yasya saṃvidātmakasya tejasaḥ sphuṭātmatā jāyate--śāṃbhavāveśavaśena tatsākṣātkāro bhavatītyarthaḥ//7//

The Lord Plays at Covering His Own Self; Liberation as Uncovering (*TĀ* 4.8a-12b)[14]

Abhinavagupta writes:

> The following objection might be raised: How could consciousness, the reflexive knower, consisting of reflexive awareness (*saṃvitparāmraṣṭrī parāmarśamayī*) by nature, be the object of reflexive awareness (*parāmṛśyā*)? Because in the creation of such form [as the object of reflexive awareness][15] that [awareness] would be insentient. [16] It is said: Consciousness of the own-self, by its very own-nature is full. There is nothing to be taken away from it, and nothing to be added to it. Such has previously been taught [at *TĀ* 2.8].[17] However, because it is able to accomplish the implausible, because of its uninhibited freedom, that Lord is clever in the play of hiding its own self.[18]

The objection is not a very solid objection, at least in the way it is presented. Further, AG does not respond directly to such an objection. Nonetheless, it is instructive to review what is being said here.

The objection is this: How could reflexive consciousness become the object of reflexive consciousness? If it were to become such an object,

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[14] References to *mṛś* terms: Abhinavagupta, 4.8a: *parāmraṣṭṛ* and *parāmarśa*; 4.8b: *parāmṛśya*; 4.12b: *parā-*; Jayaratha, p. 624, l. 5: *parāmarśakatva*; p. 624, l. 6: *parāmṛśyatva*; p. 624, l. 13: *parāmṛśyatva*; p. 627, l. 5: *parāmarśa*; p. 627, l. 6: *parāmṛśyamāna*.

[15] This is according to Jayaratha.

[16] *TĀ* 4.8a-8b:
nanu saṃvitparāmraṣṭrī parāmarśamayī svataḥ/
parāmṛśyā kathaṃ tāthārūpyasṛṣṭau tu sā jaḍa//8//

[17] *TĀ* 4.9a-9b:
ucyate svātmasaṃvittiḥ svabhāvādeva nirbharā/
nāsyāmapāsyaṃ nādheyaṃ kiṃcid-ityuditaṃ purā//9//

[18] *TĀ* 4.10a-10b:
kiṃ tu durghaṭakāritvātsvācchandyānnirmalādasau/
svātma-pracchādana-krīḍā-paṇḍitaḥ parameśvaraḥ//10//

would this not imply that consciousness is insentient? Insofar as any object of knowledge must be insentient, would it not follow that consciousness itself, were it to become an object of consciousness, would be insentient? This then is an obvious contradiction as to be conscious, to be a knowing subject, is precisely to not be insentient.[19] The objector concludes then that consciousness is never an object of consciousness.

From AG's point of view, the objector is looking at things dualistically. What the objector wants to do is sharply divide reflexive awareness into two terms, subject and object and make it conform to the rules of ordinary knowledge, whereby the laws of subject-object duality apply. In such a case, reflexive awareness would become, if it were made into an object, merely another insentient thing. However, as I have mentioned above, this does not seem like a strong argument. For a knower may know another knower, but that doesn't make the second knower insentient.

Further, as I have again stated above, AG does not directly answer this objection. The important point however is that AG is of course simply using the objection in order to set himself up for his own presentation of nonduality. Thus, my comments will focus on what AG actually seems to be saying, not whether or not he does justice to the objection. Abhinavagupta's response is to simply note that consciousness is full in itself; it is never an object of transformation; there is nothing to add to it,

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[19] There are numerous passages in which AG stresses the difference between consciousness and insentience. See, for example, *TĀ* 3.102.

and nothing to take away from it. This is consistent with AG's nondual worldview. For AG, consciousness is self-contained; consciousness never steps outside of itself. Although consciousness may appear to step outside of itself, for example when, according to Maheśvarānanda, it takes a peek at itself, in reality it never does; there is no such thing as Consciousness on one side and Non-Consciousness on the other side standing in the line of Consciousness's glance.[20] It is here precisely that we can see AG's worldview as ultimately reflexive. I will return to this idea below after finishing my discussion of what AG is telling us in terms of consciousness.

Abhinavagupta is also saying that the practitioner is neither getting rid of any obscurity from consciousness nor adding clarity to consciousness; it is already perfect the way it is. Finally AG states that although God, or Pure Consciousness, is always perfect, he cleverly and paradoxically plays at being imperfect, hiding his true nature, and appearing limited. Thus it may appear that an individual who becomes enlightened has transformed an imperfect consciousness into a perfect consciousness; but what is really happening is that the individual is simply getting rid of the obstacles of darkness[21] that prevents him from seeing Perfect Consciousness, or, to put it in terms of the other side, that prevents Pure Consciousness from shining through.

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[20] See here David Michael Levin, *The Opening of Vision: Nihilism and the Postmodern Situation* (New York and London: Routledge, 1988).

[21] Sanderson notes that the concrete substance of impurity in the Śaiva Siddhānta system becomes, in AG's nondual system, the abstract state of self-limitation by consciousness or a state of contraction. The details need not detain us here. See Sanderson, "Meaning," pp. 43 ff.

This should be no surprise given that Bhairava, who is perfect Consciousness, is perfectly free and able to accomplish the impossible, including the impossible act of becoming imperfect. Of course, this is a quite playful answer by Abhinavagupta. As a master logician, he is undoubtedly aware that from one standpoint this is contradictory. However, for AG, it is only from the perspective of duality that a logical contradiction follows. AG wants to think of reflexive awareness on the level of nonduality. There God is able to accomplish the implausible or paradoxical (*durghaṭakāritva*), and this in fact entails no logical paradox. Abhinavagupta' s response to the objection is that there is no logical paradox, precisely because God is able to act in a paradoxical manner; the God-experience is in fact paradoxical; this presents problems only on the level of duality.

In commenting on these verses, Jayaratha supports Abhinavagupta's statement with a reference to *TĀ* 2.8 that states that there is neither any obscurity to be taken away from consciousness, nor any clarity to be added to it. There is nothing a practitioner can do to transform consciousness; consciousness is always already perfect in itself. Differentiation manifests to the extent that Consciousness covers its true nature.

Finally, Abhinavagupta concludes his section on the purification of differentiated thinking:

> Exactly when its authentic nature is not covered, it is the covering (*ācchādana*) of the self by the Omnipresent that is the power of illusion (*māyā*), from which [there arises] differentiation, of such

> extent [as] the activity of the totality.[22] In such manner, it is precisely the manifestation of the Lord that is known as "duality;" as the eliminating of that duality, this reflexive awareness (*parāmarśa*) is set forth.[23]

AG is following Somānanda's *Śiva-Vision* here, stating that this covering is the power of illusion; and from this power, all differentiation, and all activities, affected by this differentiation, arise.[24] This differentiation, or duality, is simply the manifestation of the Lord; and this is what is known as "duality." Reflexive Awareness is to be understood as the elimination of that duality.

JR reiterates AG's statements here stating that dualistic thinking is the cause of bondage and the antidote is pure thinking, which he refers to here as "reflexive awareness." Through this process of reflexive awareness, which in nondualistic terms continually turns back on itself, consciousness reaches higher and higher levels of clarity. JR also emphasizes that there is no difference between cause and effect, or the goal and the means.

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[22] *TĀ* 4.11a-11b:
anāvṛte svarūpe'pi yadātmācchādanaṃ vibhoḥ/
saiva māyā yato bheda etāvānviśvavṛttikaḥ//11//
I am reading *anāvṛte* for *anāvṛtte*: this emendation is noted by Sanderson and implied by Gnoli's translation.

[23] *TĀ* 4.12a-12b:
tathābhāsanamevāsya dvaitamuktaṃ maheśituḥ/
taddvayāpāsanenāyaṃ parāmarśo'bhidhiyate//12//

[24] See Torella, *IPK*, p. XVII.

Ultimately, there is no such thing as goal and means and therefore any problem of bondage and freedom is irrelevant. The implication is that reflexive awareness is a process of recognizing non-differentiation. Turning back on itself, consciousness no longer separates subject and object, but recognizes the object's identity with the subject. The process does not occur all-at-once; rather it takes place gradually. Thus, there are different levels of clarity, of recognizing or "noticing" nonduality.[25]

I want to return now to the issue of reflexivity. We have seen that in the course of AG's exposition he wants to ultimately defend a worldview where consciousness is self-contained, where there is only consciousness, and consciousness never "steps outside of itself." It is here precisely where we can see that AG's worldview is ultimately "reflexive" or, in simple terms, why there is "so much reflexivity" in AG's thinking. The crux of the issue is this: any event, any activity between two poles of reality, is ultimately, according to AG, c consciousness acting on itself, since Consciousness is all there is.

Further, and quite significantly, we also see here how AG's worldview can become distorted in scholarly interpretations. In other

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[25] See my summary in my first chapter of Nagel's theory of the connection between *vimarśa*

words, it is in fact true that when AG discusses the notion of *vimarśa* he is referring to nothing less than, in Singh's creative terminology, consciousness "con-sciring" consciousness. However, this is too abstract; in fact it is quite unexciting in that it leaves out the essentials of his understanding and thus in a very real sense undermines AG's complex, rich worldview. In other words, as we have seen, although a completely pure Consciousness dwells at the top of AG's hierarchy; this is simply a logical necessity. This, as Padoux has stated, "allows the maintenance of a transcendent absolute in a system naturally averse to it."[26] What really matters for AG is the dynamic nature of Consciousness evoked best by the sexual union of Bhairava and his consort. When Bhairava and his consort are "sweet talking," it is true, logically speaking, that it is really Bhairava "talking to himself," that is, the one Pure Consciousness turning back on itself. Practically speaking, however, AG really wants to emphasize that indeed Bhairava is not at all alone, but having sexual intercourse with his consort.[27]

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and "levels of noticing" in both the *IPK* and *IPV*.

[26] Padoux, *Vāc*, p. 78.

[27] See also Padoux, *Vāc*, p. 79.

Thus, although, in the section of *TĀ* 4 that I have been discussing, AG speaks only in terms of consciousness, he is setting himself up, as we will see, to execute his hermeneutics of consciousness in later parts of *TĀ* 4, where he will interpret both worship and *mantra* practice in terms of nondual consciousness. In doing so, we will see that (1) his descriptions of consciousness are highly charged by erotic evocative language and (2) his descriptions ultimately go back to the ritual of sexual union.

These two facts are intimately related. For AG, language, consciousness, and reality are erotic because his model of Consciousness is rooted in the consciousness that arises in the context of erotico-mystical practices. What that tells us is that AG is not simply "plugging and chugging." In other words, he is not taking some abstract model of Consciousness from Recognition philosophy and simply superimposing the model on tantric ritual. The two must not be separated. His model of Consciousness is rooted in tantra. He thinks with tantra, in order to think about Consciousness. Just as AG's Recognition philosophy is ultimately grounded in his aesthetics, as Gerow has artfully shown, the same is the case in the matter of tantra: AG's Recognition philosophy is ultimately grounded in tantra.

Sanderson of course has already masterfully shown that AG interprets various forms of practice in terms of the Trika and Krama worldview, as I have already pointed out in the previous chapter. Sanderson describes this nondualistic worldview as understanding the state of liberation as the blissful recollection of the Self conceived as potent, penetrating, and pulsating, continually surging forth through the senses to emit all of reality. It is of no little significance that this ultimate erotic-aesthetic experience of consciousness was achieved precisely in the performance of sexual intercourse with the female messenger. Most importantly then, not only is AG overcoding earlier practices, but in doing so, his interpretation of consciousness is affected. I now turn to AG's discussion of worship and *mantra* practice with the goal of showing how his understanding of Consciousness itself is intimately linked to erotic tantric praxis.

Artificial Worship as Nonessential

In this section, Abhinavagupta discusses "the nonessential [nature] of artificial worship and other similar rituals" (*kalpitārcādyanādaraḥ*). The term *kalpita*, literally "artificial, made, or fabricated," is used by AG to refer

to external ritual, that is, ritual acted out concretely with the use of concrete materials. AG is contrasting this type of ritual with true ritual, ritual "acted out" in thought alone.[28] A primary meaning of the term *anādara* is "without giving notice or regard." With the use of this term, AG means that the individual does not need to pay attention to artificial worship in that it is not essential to attaining liberation.[29]

Pure Wisdom and Dark Illusory Thinking (*TĀ* 4.109b-114a)[30]

Verses 109b-114b are significant in that AG describes two types of thinking, both of which are specific types of *parāmarśas*. In using *mṛś* terms to describe these two different thoughts (and their corresponding pathways as I discuss below), AG underlines the idea that whether an individual is subject to impure thinking or pure thinking, ultimately it is only Śiva himself who is cognizing. Śiva exercises his autonomy to manifest himself through the individual in either mode.

Both types of reflexive thinking are understood as conceptual formulations, yet one is impure and needs to be destroyed by the thought

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[28] Sanderson, "Meaning," p. 50.

[29] See Sanderson, "Meaning," pp. 43-47 for a discussion of AG's view of ritual.

[30] References to *mṛś* terms: Abhinavagupta, 109b: *parāmarśa;* 110a: *āmṛśant;* 110b: *parāmarśa;*

that is pure. AG is elaborating on the Śakti way of realization, conceived as the purification of mental constructs (*vikalpa*), explicitly stating that it is Śiva himself who actually destroys the impure mental construct of duality by manifesting as another mental construct, the reflexive thought of the pure essence of the Self.

This latter thought is said to have the nature of Pure or True Wisdom (*śuddhavidyā, sadvidyā*). In AG's cosmological scheme, as well as that of Śaiva Siddhānta, Pure Wisdom represents the thirty-second level of reality (*tattva*) and is the first level of the Pure Path (*śuddhādhvan*), that is, the pure or liberated division within the cosmic hierarchy, the first level to go beyond Illusion.[31] Grounded in this Pure Wisdom then, such a thought gives rise to enlightened consciousness. The True Ritual intensifies this thought to the point that all awareness of duality is destroyed so that pure nondual awareness rushes in filling the void.

AG also states here that there two types of pure reflexive thinking, one that is independent of senses and objects, and one that is dependent on them. In this chapter, AG is concerned with the former, that is, with the

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Jayaratha, p. 731, l. 2: *parāmarśa*; p. 731, l. 5: *āmṛśant*; p. 731, l. 13: *parāmarśa*.

[31] Sanderson, "Meaning," p. 35 and "Maṇḍala," p. 179; see also Lawrence, *Rediscovering God*, p. 62.

purification of mental constructs that takes place independently of senses and objects, through thought alone. Nonetheless he is acknowledging here that the same process of purifying one's thoughts takes place at a lower level of practice that includes external forms.[32]

Abhinavagupta writes:

> Thus, the Lord, for the purpose of destroying the reflexive thought of duality (*dvaitaparāmarśa*), in some cases keeps continually reflectively thinking (*āmṛśat*) of the pure essence of the Self.
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> This reflexive thought of the essence of the Self (*svabhāvaparāmarśa*), which is either without the means of senses and objects and so on, or otherwise, that is, turned towards those [senses and objects and so on], [is] a mental construct, [arising] from [the Lord's] freedom.
>
> [There are two kinds of mental constructs:]
>
> [Dark Illusory Thinking:] That [mental construct] which fixates on separating out one's own self from among the multitude of things clearly appearing in the pure and autonomous Jewel-Self is called "Dark [Illusory Thinking]."
>
> [Pure Wisdom:] On the other hand, the abiding in identity with the Self, abounding in the multitude of things, has for its nature Pure Wisdom, equivalent to [the thought], "All this is nothing other than Myself."
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> This mental construct whose form is Pure Wisdom, whose nature is clear, destroys here the mental construct of Illusion, the cause of differentiation.[33]

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[32] See here *TĀ* 1.231-240: summarized by Sanderson in "Meaning," p. 47.

[33] *TĀ* 4.109b-114a:
evaṃ dvaitaparāmarśanāśāya parmeśvaraḥ//109//
kvacitsvabhāvamamalamā*mṛś*annaniśaṃ sthitaḥ/

AG compares the Self here to a jewel (*ratna*) which possesses the capacity to reflect objects. AG is merely making the point that the Self appears as various objects. His use of the term *ratna* here contrasts with Utpaladeva's use of the similar term *sphaṭika* ("crystal"). Prior to AG, Utpaladeva had made the point that Light, the Self, is *not* like the crystal. Although the crystal assumes different forms it is unlike Light in not being self-illuminating; the true Light on the other hand is reflexively aware, always overflowing and always amazed by its fullness.[34]

AG describes two ways that the individual may respond to this Jewel-Self projecting itself as the world of plurality (as noted above, these individual modes correspond to the two ways that Śiva manifests):[35] (1) the individual may fixate on duality, failing to recognize all things as the play of Consciousness. This is the pathway of Dark Illusory Thinking, based in ignorance, that keeps one enmeshed in duality, separation, and alienation;

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yaḥ svabhāvaparāmarśa indriyārthaādyupāyataḥ//110//
vinaiva tanmukho'nyo vā svātantryāttadvikalpanam/
tacca svacchasvatantrātmaratnanirbhāsini sphuṭam//111//
bhāva-oghe bhedasaṃdhātṛ svātmano naiśamucyate/
tadeva tu samastārthanirbharātmaikagocaram//112//
śuddhavidyātmakaṃ sarvamevedamahamityalam/
idaṃ vikalpanaṃ śuddhavidyārūpaṃ sphuṭātmakam//113//
pratihantīha māyīyaṃ vikalpaṃ bhedabhāvakam/

[34] See IPK 1.5.11: translated by Torella, in *IPK*, p. 118; and Torella's comments at note 23 on p. 118-119.

or, (2) instead of fixating on duality, the individuality may think of nonduality. True Ritual then is where one follows this pathway of Pure Wisdom, purifying one's mental constructs to recognize all objective reality as simply an emanation of one's True Self.

The implication then is that discursive thinking is neither inherently binding nor liberating.[36] Even the individual on the pure pathway conceptualizes. However, the conceptions used here, based in Pure Wisdom, are understood as being able to eventually obliterate the impure mental constructs and open one's vision to reality. Similarly, the world of plurality is not mere illusion. If interpreted as separated from the true self then one is having illusory thoughts about reality. If interpreted as a projection of the Self, as the dynamic aspect of the Light of Consciousness, then one is having pure thoughts about reality, seeing reality in terms of nonduality.

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[35] My interpretation is partly inspired by Pandey, *Abhinavagupta*, p. 520.
[36] I am influenced here by Sanderson's discussion in "Meaning," pp. 48-49.

Reflexive Thought of Pure Wisdom Manifesting in Various Modes (*TĀ* 4.114b-115a)[37]

These verses are significant in that they reveal AG's plan for a hermeneutics of consciousness, in which the key element is Reflexive Thought of Pure Wisdom, said to manifest in various ways. The specific ways AG names are concrete forms of ritual. AG will interpret each of these various external forms in terms of inner consciousness alone.

If the goal is the internal awareness of nonduality in which the Self becomes experienced as blissfully radiating outward as the totality, then each of these "thought-rituals" are a particular way of engendering that awareness. They are able to do this precisely by means of purified thinking based in Pure Wisdom, which destroys the mental construct of dark illusory thinking. Abhinavagupta writes:

> Further, that very Reflexive Thought of Pure Wisdom, is manifold, [manifesting] by means of bathing (*snāna*), purification (*śuddhi*), worship (*arcanā*), oblation (*homa*), meditation (*dhyāna*), recitation (*japya*), and so on.[38]

AG intends to be neither comprehensive nor systematic in the listing that he offers here. Thus, bathing, purification, and worship (as well as

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[37] Abhinavagupta refers to *parāmarśa* at 114b; Jayaratha refers to *parāmṛśya* on p. 734, l. 1; *parāmarśa* on p. 734, l. 6; and *parāmarśavant* on p. 734, l. 14.
[38] *TĀ* 4.114b-115a:
śuddhavidyāparāmarśo yaḥ sa eva tvanekadhā//114//

practices not mentioned in the list above) are discussed in the same section as this verse, "Artificial Worship as Nonessential." However, oblation, meditation, and recitation are expounded in the section, "True Recitation," where he also explains "true *mudrā*," (not mentioned in the list above). Finally, another section in *TĀ* 4, "The Vitality of *Mantra*" is completely devoted to showing how *mantra* practice (not mentioned in the list above) also gives rise to the reflexive thought of pure wisdom. As I will say more about both of the sections "Artificial Worship" and "Vitality of *Mantra*" below, here I want cite his descriptions found in the section "True Recitation," as examples of his hermeneutics of consciousness.

> For the one who is immersed in the uncreated heart [of reflexive awareness], it does not matter what one does, breathes, or thinks; all is grasped as [True (*vāstava*)] Recitation (*japya*).
>
> True Meditation abides in whatever the yogin creates, internally or externally, at his will, by force of his own [consciousness], [one aspect of which is] the emission. . . .
>
> For the yogin in the Kula, completely vibrating (*ghūrṇita*) with the supreme Bhairava-juice pervading him in superabundance, whatever position of the body [he takes], that is understood to be the [True] Seal.
>
> Eternally, burning within us, free of any concrete support of fuel, is the flaming fire of the ensemble of our senses. The various knowable

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snānaśuddhyarcanāhomadhyānajapyādiyogataḥ/

> objects, entering into this fire-consciousness and igniting further its blaze, gives rise to . . . the [True] Oblation.[39]

This interpretation of ritual in terms of consciousness of course pervades all of AG's work. Sanderson has clearly shown that one of AG's goal is to demonstrate the nondualistic nature of specific forms of tantric ritual, in other words, that these forms engender enlightened awareness, being processes of contemplating the Self and recognizing the Self's true identity as the dynamic emanator of all reality.[40] Thus, AG's *Tāntrāloka* is one great coding project; his nondualistic vision is encoded into the various factors and stages of these rituals.

It also pervades the work of later interpreters of AG. Sanderson has already provided examples from the works of Kṣemarāja and Amṛtānandanātha. Examples may also be found in the works of Cakrapāṇinātha and Maheśvarānanda. Thus, for example, Maheśvarānanda interprets worship, breath control, visualization, and gestures in terms of consciousness:[41]

> Worship difficult to accomplish in this world, this is nothing other than the reflexive awareness of one's own force. The worship of the

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[39] *TĀ* 4.194a-202b: my translation of Gnoli's translation.
[40] Sanderson, "Meaning," especially pp. 43ff.
[41] I give an example of Cakrapāṇinātha's "hermeneutics of consciousness" in my sixth chapter; the example is extracted from Garzilli's translation. Many other examples may be found in this text.

> Master of the Universe consists in liquors, betel leaves, perfumes and flowers easy to obtain. Whether vitality is put into action or remains in repose, in order to recognize one's own Reality, one must comprehend the control of the breath as the abolishing of external events. The decaying of the body is the destroying of impurity; its consumption is the extinguishing of conceptual traces; plunging in water is the creating of purity being sprinkled by the nectar of knowledge. Gestures purifying the body of the ensemble of dualistic thoughts are the reflexive awareness free of duality; the water of the offering is the play of the knowable objects; and the flowers are the essences that nourish their own Essence.[42]

These verses then, along with the verses of Abhinavagupta cited above, are examples of what I have been referring to as a "hermeneutics of consciousness." Important to note here is that this exegetical project had been foreshadowed by AG's predecessor Somānanda, who, in *Śiva-Vision,* outlined a doctrine of nonduality. In doing so, ritual, like all other forms of plurality, was seen simply as an external projection of Śiva. As such it was neither binding nor liberating in itself. What was binding was fixating on dualistic notions such as "binding and liberating," "impure and pure," and so on. What was liberating was the awareness that these various forms are simply the play of Consciousness, or Śiva himself.[43] Thus, according to Somānanda:

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[42] *MAM*, verses 42-45: my translation of Silburn's translation.

[43] I am summarizing Torella's summary of *Śiva-Vision*: Torella, *IPK*, pp. XVII-XVIII.

> Ritual bathing, offering to the fire, *pūjā*, etc. . . . are external forms whose core is the awareness that everything is resolved in Śiva. He who worships, he who is worshipped and the act of worship are in reality all one–Śiva. . . .[44]

Thus, the process of interiorization had already been set in motion by AG's predecessor Somānanda. The details however were unpacked by AG himself. I now turn to one final example of this AG's well-articulated interiorization.

True Worship (*TĀ* 4.115b-118a)

In these verses, AG does not explicitly refer to reflexive awareness. They are significant however because, again, they are examples of the various ways in which the reflexive thought of pure awareness manifests.

Quite significantly, as Sanderson has shown, AG correlates these ways with stages of daily ritual in the common Śaiva tantric ritual structure. These stages include the preliminary rituals of bathing in water, satisfying the *mantra*-deities and various other deities, and bathing in ashes for ascetics (or an appropriate substitute for householders); the transformation of the individual into Śiva, which includes various stages of visualization, such as the destruction of the individual's body, the creation

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[44] *ŚD* VII.87 ff. and VII. 94cd, as summarized by Torella: Torella, *IPK*, pp. XVII-XVIII.

of a new Śiva-body, and the worship of one's self as Śiva through installing *mantras* at various points on the body; and in addition to these stages, the worshipping of various other deities.[45] AG writes:

> [Preliminaries:]
>
> [Bathing in Water and Satisfying the *Mantra*-Deities and Other Deities:] Having blissfully plunged into the totality that overflows with the liquid bliss of one's own consciousness [and become] pure . . . he satisfies all the circles of the Paths.[46]
>
> [Bathing in Ashes:] It is said that the bath is an immersion of the body in white ashes that have arisen from the fuel of the totality burnt in the fire of the dancing consciousness.[47]
>
> [Transformation into Śiva in Three Stages:]
>
> [Destruction of Individual Body:] And who has performed the bathing and satisfied the infinite divinities in this way should then also purify the categories of reality that form the body.[48]

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[45] Sanderson, "Meaning," pp. 27-28, 41, and 50-51.
[46] *TĀ* 4.115b-116a:
viśvametatsvasaṃvittirasanirbharitaṃ rasāt//115//
āviśya śuddho nikhilaṃ tarpayedadhvamaṇḍalaṃ/
I am in great debt once again to Alexis Sanderson, here for his observations and analyses concerning the correspondences between the stages in daily ritual and AG's hermeneutics of consciosness. I have noted the correspondences in square brackets in my translations both here and below. These have been extracted from Sanderson's discussion and translation in "Meaning," pp. 27-28, 41, and 50-51.
[47] *TĀ* 4.116b-117a:
ullāsibodhahutabhugdagdhaviśvendhanodite//116//
sitabhasmani dehasya majjanaṃ snānamucyate/
See also *TĀ* 3.262-4 on feeding the fire of consciousness with the fuel of duality.
[48] *TĀ* 4.117b-118a:
itthaṃ ca vihitasnānastarpitānantadevataḥ//117//
tato'pi dehārambhiṇi tattvāni pariśodhayet/

In these examples, AG is describing the true form of ritual, used to destroy the thought of duality. Thus, for example, the true bath becomes distinguished from the ordinary bath where the thought of duality dominates. The true bath is a way to realize identity with Śiva. Thus, AG elaborates on his earlier statement that pure reflexive thought manifests in various modes, explaining here how the bath may be understood in terms of consciousness.

Purity and Impurity (*TĀ* 4.118b-120a)

In accord with his hermeneutics of interiority, Abhinavagupta now redefines impurity and purity. Impurity is the view that the body is separate from Śiva. Purity is cleansing oneself of this wrong view, literally, "rubbing it away" (*vimardana*). Abhinavagupta writes:

> [Creation of Śiva-Body:] That mind which distinguishes those [categories of reality] whose nature is Śiva [from Śiva] is impurity. Purity is understood as the opposite; it is the rubbing away of that [dualistic] thought. Thus, for the one who sees his own body as being a vessel identical to consciousness, the process of distinguishing melts away. He dwells, as the All-Powerful Lord, in the state of pure consciousness and freedom.[49]

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[49] *TĀ* 4.118b-120a:
śivātmakeṣvapyeteṣu buddhiryā vyatirekiṇī//118//
saivāśuddhiḥ parākhyātā śuddhastaddhīvimardanam/
evaṃ svadehaṃ bodhaikapātraṃ galitabhedakam//119//
paśyansaṃvittimātratve svatantre tiṣṭhati prabhuḥ/

This description is consistent with AG's hermeneutics of consciousness. Seeing the body as the vessel of pure consciousness, the temple of God, dissolves the impure process of differentiating. Only then does one claim his primordial freedom, in identity with the All-Powerful Lord, as he recognizes that he always dwells in Pure Consciousness.

More than that however, AG is again playing with words. The term *vimardana* evokes, as it resembles in sound, the term *vimarśaṇa*. The two terms are correlated conceptually as well. The pure *vimarśa* is what "rubs away" the impure thinking. AG is also purposely using an erotic term here. Another meaning of *vimardana* is "sexual rubbing." Thus, AG is foreshadowing the climax that he describes in the next set of verses, to which I now turn.

The Coming Together of Śiva and Śakti (*TĀ* 4.120b-122a)

Finally Abhinavagupta redefines worship, in an erotically evocative fashion, as any act in the world of sensuality that brings pure bliss to one's consciousness. The "flow of reality," formerly experienced as separated, which is nothing less that Bhairava's power, i.e., Śakti, comes together with

Bhairava, as the worshipper is reimmersed in the ocean of Pure Consciousness, returning home to the abode of Brahman.

> [Meditating on Self as Śiva:] Whatever brings joy to consciousness, in any world of the senses whatsoever, that leads toward the true abode of Brahman; that truly is an act of worship.
>
> [End of Daily Ritual:]
>
> [Worship of Various Other Deities:] Worship indeed is the coming together of the [formerly-]separated flow of reality [Śakti], with the Self [Śiva], the Autonomous and Immaculate Consciousness of Bhairava.[50]

AG has been leading up to this verse with erotic terms throughout this section. Thus, he evokes notions of wild dancing, blissful plunging, overflowing, liquid bliss, satisfying, circles, immersion, rubbing, and melting away. He continues this trend in these verses adding notions of flowing and coming together. Further, terms such as "bliss" and "abode of Brahman" have even more specific sexual connotations for AG. As will be seen when I discuss *TĀ* 29 the highest abode is where the union of Śiva and Śakti is experienced through the ritual of sexual union; such an experience is also described as the "place of bliss."

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[50] *TĀ* 4.120b-122a:
yatkiṃcinmānasāhlādi yatra kvāpīndriyasthitau//120//
yojyate brahmasaddhāmni pūjopakaraṇaṃ hi tat/
pūjā nāma vibhinnasya bhāvaughasyāpi saṃgatiḥ//121//
svatantravimalānantabhairavīyacidātmanā/

Even more suggestive however is the correlations AG has been setting up. He is clearly leading up to the climax of ritual. Again as Sanderson has shown, AG is inspired here in his hermeneutics by the Krama ritual and this last verse is meant to evoke "the liberating contemplation of the natural cycle of the Goddess Cognition," the primary Krama ritual.[51]

What needs to be emphasized here however, as Sanderson has underlined elsewhere, is that this contemplation was achieved precisely in the Krama ritual of sexual union. Again, according to the Krama tradition, the highest level of consciousness is experienced in a ritual of sexual union with a Messenger in which Kālī or Lady Black Hole and her twelve consciousness-goddesses are worshipped. The climax of the ritual, which is presumably coextensive with the physical climax, is the recognition of the nonduality of the Self and its projections, of bondage and liberation; the Self which is Kālī is experienced as the inner awareness pulsating beyond ego through the senses.[52]

The suggestion then is that AG is clearly thinking of sexual union in this last verse. In this way, AG not only reinterprets ritual in terms of

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[51] Sanderson, "Meaning," pp. 51-52.

consciousness, he interprets ritual in terms of the erotic consciousness that arises in the ritual of sexual union, and thus the Reflexive Thought of Pure Wisdom is modeled on the experience of Erotic Bliss.

The Vitality of *Mantra*

As we have seen, true ritual is interpreted in terms of consciousness, as arising out of pure awareness and leading back to pure awareness. In terms of AG's definition of the Śakti way, true ritual purifies thought and obliterates dualistic thinking. AG now applies this same hermeneutics of consciousness to the true *mantra*.

Reflexive Awareness as the Pulsating Heart of *Mantra* (*TĀ* 4.181b-186a)[53]

Consistent with his project in *TĀ* 4 to describe practice in terms of consciousness, AG states that *Mantra*, understood as Supreme Consciousness, is nothing other than the Pulsating Heart-Consciousness, characterized by Reflexive Awareness (*parāmarśa*) and Primordial Spontaneous Sounding (*dhvani*). AG continues by describing two *mantras*

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[52] See my previous chapter for my references and more details.

[53] References to *mṛś* terms: Abhinavagupta, 181b: *parāmarśa*; 182b: *vimarśa*; 190a: *parāmarśa*; 192a: *parāmarśa*; Jayaratha, p. 827, l. 13: *parāmarśa*; p. 828, l. 4: *parāmarśa*; p. 828, l. 7: *pratyavamarśa*; p. 828, l. 12: *parāmarśa*; p. 829, l. 5: *vimarśa*; p. 837, l. 4: *parāmarśa*; p. 837, l. 5: *parāmarśa*; p. 841, l. 3: *parāmarśa*; p. 841, l. 4: *parāmarśa*; p. 841, ll. 5-6: *parāmarśa*; p. 841, l. 6: *parāmarśa*; p. 842, l. 8: *parāmarśa*; p. 842, l. 10: *parāmarśa*.

that contain this pulsating vitality; these are the two core *mantras* of the Trika and Krama traditions, the two seed-syllables *SAUḤ* and *KhPhREṂ*. He summarizes, stating clearly that these *mantras* contain vitality, which he equates with the reflexive awareness of the I, the pulsating heart of all *mantras*, and of consciousness itself.

Thus, in order to understand reflexive awareness, the notion of vitality and the pulsating heart need to be understood. These notions, as I will show, are in fact derived from the Kaula ritual of sexual union.

AG introduces his description of the *SAUḤ* and *KhPhREṂ mantras* by explaining that the Heart is the source and end of the universe; all things arise out of it at the first moment of perception and dissolve back into it at the last moment of perception. It is precisely in these moments that the Heart becomes manifest. AG equates this with Vibration (*spanda*), characterized by surging forth (*ucchalana*). AG also uses a metaphor of ocean and wave. The waves then refer to the feminine aspect of the Godhead that manifests, the vibrating, pulsating Energy which is understood as Reflexive Awareness, the primordial Heart in which all energies are continually gathered together again. AG writes:

Reflexive Awareness (*parāmarśa*) being its essential nature, [*Mantra*-Consciousness] is endowed with a primordial spontaneous sounding (*dhvani*), continually arising, called "Supreme Great Heart" (*hṛdaya*).[54]

In this Heart is the Reflexive Awareness of the Self, into which the whole universe has become liquid (*drāvita*) [and] which manifests in the first and last [moments] of the perception of things. That [reflexive awareness] has the name "universal," and is called "Vibration" (*spanda*) in the scriptures, consisting of a surging-up (*ucchalana*) within the Self.[55]

A slight shaking, not other than such [Self], is indeed this pulsation, as it is the wave of the ocean of intelligence; without such wave, there is no consciousness. The reality of the ocean is the state of wavelessness, then waves, and so on.

This [pulsating] is the essence of the ensemble of everything. The insentient universe, has consciousness for its essence, its foundation resting in that [consciousness]. That essence is the great Heart.[56]

At least on one level, given the references to the universe, its resorption and emission, AG is discussing cosmology; in particular he is describing nothing less than the center of the universe.

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[54] *TĀ* 4.181b-182a:
parāmarśasvabhāvatvādetasyā yaḥ svayaṃ dhvaniḥ//181//
sadoditaḥ sa evoktaḥ paramaṃ hṛdayaṃ mahat/

[55] *TĀ* 4.182b-183b:
hṛdaye svavimarśo'sau drāvitāśeṣaviśvakaḥ//182//
bhāvagrahādiparyantabhāvī sāmānyasaṃjñakaḥ/
spandaḥ sa kathyate śāstre svātmanyucchalanātmakaḥ//183//

[56] *TĀ* 4.184a-186a:
kiṃciccalanametāvadananyasphuraṇaṃ hi yat/
ūrmireṣā vibodhābdherna saṃvidanayā vinā//184//
nistaraṅgataraṅgādivṛttireva hi sindhutā/
sārametatsamastasya yaccitsāraṃ jaḍaṃ jagat//185//
tadadhīnapratiṣṭhatvāttatsāraṃ hṛdayaṃ mahat/

However, AG's cosmology is an erotic cosmology. AG evokes here a reality that is at once flowing and throbbing. In this passage he compares the center and totality which arises out of this center to the ocean and its waves; and in describing the dissolution, AG describes the universe as having become liquid (*drāvita*). Further, this reality is one that vibrates (*spand-*), pulsates (*sphur-*), and surges (*śal-*; *ud-śal*). AG's erotic and poetic manner of discussing cosmology, on the surface at least, is only natural. I recall here that the center is nothing less than Bhairava and his consort in sexual union. AG is journeying back to that center, recollecting and evoking the energy that lies therein, the constant pulsating, throbbing, and vibrating of the intermingling couple that is nothing less than the fountain of all reality.

This might not be too earth-shaking if AG were not a master of precision. In this passage AG is foreshadowing his discussion of the ultimate experience that takes place in sexual union. That experience, symbolized by the phoneme *AU*, is the experience of the Self in its dynamic aspect of continual activity, the Self in which and through the infinite energies of the heart that make up the totality are continually emitted and

resorbed, arising and falling back like waves of the ocean.[57] What AG moves on to suggest is that the pulsating heart, the center where all things melt away, and where all action takes place, is precisely the pulsating heart of the Goddess; here he means "the vulva of the Goddess." How and why this is so I will discuss below. What I want to point to now is the implication of all this. The abstract idea of the reflexive awareness of the "I" is derived from the concrete bodily-felt experiences through the pulsating heart, that is, through the vulva of the *yoginī*. To move in the heart is to recollect Being, not as some abstract idea, but as an experience in the body, to experience the touching of consciousness. *Vimarśa* then is grounded in the very concrete ritual of sexual union.

SAUḤ, the Heart of Emission *Mantra* (*TĀ* 4.186b-189a)[58]

Having described the center, the Heart, AG now describes the journey back to the center, the Seed of the Heart. This *mantra*, *SAUḤ*, is termed the "heart of emission," and is understood as embodying the Trika Goddess Parā, conceived by AG as the highest reality.

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[57] See Dyczkowski, [].

[58] Also discussed at *TĀ* 3.168-174, 5.142-5, and 30.27-28a. Below I discuss the verses from *TĀ* 3.

AG refers to the *mantra SAUḤ* in code, that is he "overcodes" the *mantra*, using the hermeneutical device of "semantic analysis" (*nirvacana*). AG creatively analyzes its name, here simply the three phonemes that make up this seed-syllable, to access its true essence, the creative emission that it embodies.[59]

> Thus indeed this reality (*sat*) [the Phoneme *S*], whose root is [the Egg of] Brahmā, is called "Egg of *Māyā*."[60]
>
> It would not at all be called "reality," were it not to ascend through will, knowledge, and action [the Trident,[61] the Phoneme *AU*].
>
> From moving through that threefold energy, it is indeed emitted (*visṛjyate*) [the *Visarga*, the phoneme *Ḥ*] into the Self which is Bhairava-Consciousness; or else it is emitted to the outside from that [Bhairava-Consciousness].
>
> Thus, the nature of reality (*sat*) [Phoneme *S*] of these realities (*sat*) [phoneme *S*; beginning with the Egg of Brahmā and extending into the Egg of *Māyā*] abides having projected, by means of the supreme consciousness, the emission [the phoneme *Ḥ*] whose essence is the threefold energy [the phoneme *AU*].[62]

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[59] See Sanderson, "Meaning," especially p. 59 and p. 59, n. 135.

[60] I am again indebted to Gnoli and Sanderson. My parenthetical insertions referencing the phonemes follows Gnoli, the first to decode AG's encryption. My insertions referencing the eggs follows Sanderson, "Visualization," p. 57, n. 113: According to the *MVT*, the Egg of Brahmā or the Egg of Earth includes only earth, the first category of reality (*tattva*); the Egg of Primordial Matter, includes that and everything up through primordial matter, the twenty-fourth level of reality; the next Egg, the Egg of Illusion, includes that and everything up through Illusion, the thirty-first level of reality. The Egg of Śakti includes that and everything up through Śakti, the thirty-fifth level of reality. Śiva is the thirty-sixth level of reality.

[61] See the additional decoding insights by Sanderson in "Visualization," pp. 56-58.

[62] *TĀ* 4.186b-189a:

tathā hi sadidaṃ brahmamūlaṃ māyāṇḍasaṃjñitam//186//

One way to approach this *mantra* is to understand the cosmological or metaphysical truth that it embodies; this is also related, as we will shortly see, to its soteriological value.

From one perspective, this "heart in emission" *mantra* embodies all the energies of creation itself. Accessing the power of this *mantra*, its vitality, is to access that emissional energy of Consciousness, the source of all creation; as AG himself tells us the grasping of the vitality is identical to becoming reflexively aware, recognizing the Self as the source of all energies.

This link between the *mantra* and becoming liberated is consistent with AG's project in *TĀ* 4, that is, to describe various practices, including *mantra* practice as part of the Śakti way, conceived as the purification of discursive formulation.[63] Again, by "purification," AG means a gradual assimiliation of reality to the point of finally embodying that reality. At first the individual must visualize or meditate dualistically. However, if the mind is directed towards nondual reality, towards things as they really

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icchājñānakriyāroham vinā naiva saducyate/
tacchaktitritayārohādbhairavīye cidātmani//187//
visṛjyate hi tattasmādbahirvātha visṛjyate/
evaṃ sadrūpataivaiṣāṃ satāṃ śaktitrayātmatām//188//
visargaṃ parabodhena samākṣipyaiva vartate/

are, then that thought will give way, through gradual purification or interiorization, to the obliteration of all dualistic thinking and at that point the direct experience of reality, the very truth that one could only approach dualistically at first, arises. It should not be surprising then that the *mantra*, as Padoux and others have pointed out, embodies a metaphysical truth. I would not contest this and, by way of example, I cite here Padoux's interpretation:

> With its three constituent phonemes we have the Absolute itself (S), the triad of Śiva's fundamental powers in their absolute fullness (AU), and finally the perennial surging forth (both internally and externally, but always within consciousness, the stuff the world is made of) of the Godhead's creative flow, the throbbing of the divine Heart (Ḥ). One understands easily, therefore, that to meditate on this *mantra*, to grasp its full meaning directly through an all-embracing intellectual intuition, is liberating experience.[64]

The great value of this interpretation is in recognizing the metaphysics and soteriological aspects of AG's exegesis. Moreover, in underlining such aspects, AG's own project in *TĀ* 4, the illumination of the Śakti way, is given recognition. Thus the parallels between AG's exegesis here and his earlier exegesis of worship are clearly seen.

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[63] Here I am greatly aided by and partly following Padoux's discussion in *Vāc*, p. 419.
[64] Padoux, *Vāc*, p. 419.

However, as Padoux himself recognizes, the *mantra* operates on various levels. The question becomes then: To what else might the vitality of the mantra refer? In other words, what is motivating AG's interpretation of consciousness? Taking AG's erotic language and cosmology seriously, I am again reminded that in the tantric world, the individual's goal is to reenact the primordial big bang of the God and Goddess in sexual union. One is only able to do this through the Goddess, and in particular through the Goddess's vulva. Here is where the vitality lies and AG never lost sight of this. In Abhinavagupta's hermeneutics of consciousness, *SAUḤ* is the pulsating and vitalizing core of reality precisely because it refers back to Bhairava and the Goddess in sexual union. I now want to turn to another semantic analysis of *SAUḤ* which reveals more clearly that AG understands the vitality of *mantra* in terms of the mingling of sexual fluids in the vulva of the goddess.

AG reveals this secret in *TĀ* 3 where he uses *SAUḤ* to overcode the Kaula ritual of sexual union. (AG also refers to *SAUḤ* at *TĀ* 5 and 30; see my appendix below.) AG first dwells at length on the phoneme *S*, identifying it with both the "nectar of immortality" (*amṛta*) as well as the "supreme abode" (*paraṃ dhāman*). Here we have our first hint. In *TĀ* 29,

which I discuss in my next chapter, AG, in describing the Kaula ritual of sexual union, uses the term "nectar" to refer to sexual fluid and the term "supreme abode" to refer to the vulva of the *yoginī*. AG writes:

> For that reason precisely, in this phoneme S clearly the totality shines and the yogins call that "Nectar" (*amṛta*) and "Supreme Abode" (*paraṃ dhāma*).[65] Further, that very supreme nectar [arises] in the prelude, climax, and repose[66] of [sexual] agitation.
>
> [It arises in the beginning] in love's cry (*sītkāra*); [it arises in the climax] in the real stuff (*sadbhāva*) of [sexual] pleasure (*sukha*); [it arises in the repose] in penetration (*samāveśa*) and complete integration [of male and female] (*samādhi*). That precisely they call "Supreme Undivided Brahman."[67]

I note that even here the *mantra* may be interpreted metaphysically. For example, the Nectar of Immortality is linked to the full moon, continually overflowing with this vitalizing nectar to support and nourish the universe.[68] AG's semanticization of the *mantra* is a cosmological statement; and the *mantra* embodies the emissional process.

At the same time, as I have already suggested, AG is referring back to the Kaula practice; this is further supported by other references. Thus, the nectar is said to arise in agitation; in "love's cry" (*sītkāra*), that is, the

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[65] *TĀ* 3.165b-166a:
tata eva sakāre'sminsphutaṃ viśvaṃ prakāśate//165//
amṛtaṃ ca paraṃ dhāma yoginastat pracakṣate/
[66] See Dyczkowski, *Stanzas*, p. 279.
[67] *TĀ* 3.166b-167b:
kṣobhādyantavirāmeṣu tadeva ca parāmṛtaṃ//166//
sītkārasukhasadbhāvasamāveśasamādhiṣu/
tadeva brahma paramamavibhaktaṃ pracakṣate//167//
[68] See also Dyczkowski, *Stanzas*, p. 279 and p. 372, n. 139.

moaning of erotic union; in sexual pleasure (*sukha*); in the real stuff (*sadbhāva*), that is, the sexual fluid;[69] in penetration (*samāveśa*); and in the complete integration (*samādhi*), that is, the union of male and female.[70]

AG also quotes from a text, whose very name, AG himself tells us, refers to what he is really talking about, that is, the union of Śiva and Śakti, and the union of male and female during the Kaula rite.

> The Lord Himself says in the glorious *Kulaguhkara*, whose name evokes the union of Energy and Energy-Possessor: "The form of the cavity of the beak of a crow, free of meditation and concentration, called "without-vowel," the "poison-principle," [such] has been illumined [by me], because of my love for you."[71]

I note here that the text refers to a "poison-principle." AG will be more explicit later and identify this with the letter *S*, while at the same time identifying the "love-principle" with the letter *Ḥ*, and the "without-mark principle" with the letter *AU*. I will say more about these identifications below. For now I note, that this text is clearly referring to a sexual practice. It does this by referring to the cavity of the beak of the crow, which is also a reference to the vulva. More precisely, the cavity of the beak is associated

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[69] See White, "Transformations," p. 190 on *sadbhāva* as referring to the sexual emission of the *yoginīs* in the *Kaulajñānanirṇaya*.

[70] *Samādhi* is also used in *TĀ* 29 to refer to sexual union; see my fourth chapter.

[71] *TĀ* 3.168a-169b:
uvāca bhagavāneva tacchrīmatkulaguhkare/
śaktiśaktimadaikātmyalabdhānvarthābhidhānake//168//
kākacañcupuṭākāraṃ dhyānadhāraṇavarjitam/

with a "seal" referred to as the kissing-pose; the kissing-pose was the practice of drinking sexual fluid from the vulva of the *yoginī*.[72] AG refers to this at *TĀ* 32:[73]

> "The supreme reality that is heard while the mouth has posed in the form of a kiss, the reality devouring this totality in the cavity existing between the sun and the moon, thanks, indeed, to that, the yogin becomes a sky-goer." Such is the sky-goer according to the *Kāmikatantra*.[74]

AG next refers to the phoneme of emission *Ḥ* and the phoneme *AU*:

> The desire-principle [the phoneme *Ḥ*], fullness, is revealed in the banging together, and the potion-principle [the phoneme *S*], the nectar, [is revealed] in the streaming away of the individual's state of being obscured, as the potion could cause the light of the non-pervader [the individual] to be covered.[75]

> Immaculate is the supreme abode [the phoneme *AU*]; but the essence [the phoneme *S*] of that [supreme abode] is with-mark, whose nature is the energy of action, made of the totality; for from that it would pulsate forth.[76]

> Desire is will [the phoneme *Ḥ*]; poison is knowledge [the phoneme *S*], and the Goddess [the phoneme *AU*], without-mark, is action,

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viṣatattvamanackākhyaṃ tava snehātprakāśitam//169//

[72] See White, "Transformations," for further references to this practice.

[73] First noted by Gnoli, *LDSS*.

[74] *TĀ* 32.47b-48b: my translation of Gnoli, *LDSS*. See also *PTLV*, verses 11-16, and commentary, p. 11: translated in Muller-Ortega, *Triadic Heart*, p. 190.

[75] TĀ 3.170a-170b:
kāmasya pūrṇatā tattvaṃ saṃghaṭṭe pravibhāvyate/
viṣasya cāmṛtaṃ tattvaṃ chādyatve'ṇoścyute sati//170//
vyāptrī śaktirviṣaṃ yasmādavyāptuśchādayenmahaḥ/

[76] *TĀ* 3.171b-172a:
nirañjanaṃ paraṃ dhāma tattvaṃ tasya tu sāñjanam//171//
kriyāśaktyātmakaṃ viśvamayaṃ tasmātsphuredyataḥ/

unmarked; one who penetrates into these three is called Śiva-Bhairava.[77]

Here, one should always ascend, thus our gurus have understood. One having entered the poison is neither pure nor poison. There is the pure perceiving only, the "I," that pulsates forth by means of meditation.[78]

The references to the three principles (*tattvas*) of poison (*viṣatattva*), love (*kāma*), and without-mark (*nirañja*), which correspond to *S*, *Ḥ*, and *AU*, respectively, also implicate the ritual of sexual union. As Dyczkowski and Silburn have shown, these principles are complex symbols from the *Kaulatantras* that evoke various levels of experience in the performance of sexual union. These principles are referred to again in the *VBh*:[79]

But that one fixes the thought, which is nothing more than pleasure, in the interval between fire and poison. It is isolated then or filled up with breath and one is integrated with the bliss of love.[80]

AG unpacks this with reference to the *SAUḤ mantra*, describing each of the three principles as corresponding to an experience of a yogin. Both Silburn

[77] *TĀ* 3.172b-173a:
icchā kāmo viṣaṃ jñānaṃ kriyā devī nirañjanam//172//
etattrayasamāveśaḥ śivo bhairava ucyate/
[78] *TĀ* 3.173b-174b:
atra rūḍhiṃ sadā kuryaditi no guravo jaguḥ//173//
viṣatattve saṃpraviśya na bhūtaṃ na viṣaṃ na ca/
grahaḥ kevala evāhamiti bhāvanayā sphuret//174//
[79] My comments here on the relationship between *SAUḤ* and this passage rely on Silburn, *VBh*, pp. 109-111. I have translated her commentary in an appendix below. See also Dyczkowski, *Stanzas*, pp. 279-281.
[80] *VBh* 68: my translation of Silburn.

and Dyczkowski have decoded the various levels in AG's exegesis. Thus, the experiences may also be described in terms of breath yoga and subtle body experiences; most importantly for us, the experiences also refer to aspects of sexual union. Poison, identified with *S*, is the beginning of sexual union; Love, identified with *Ḥ* is the end of sexual union; and Without-mark, identified with *AU*, is the moment in between, the climax, when one experiences the totality as an emanation of one's own consciousness:

> *Nirañjanatattva*, the reality without artifice and immaculate which, subjacent to the other realities grounds them and explains them, corresponds to *Śivatattva*, the supreme category in which the energy of activity is revealed in its greatest clarity and intensity. Its symbol is the trident which contains the three energies in activity.[81]

In symbolizing the high-point of the erotic-mystical experience, the phoneme *AU* would also naturally evoke the locus of that experience, the Goddess's vulva. This is suggested further by the fact that the phoneme *AU* is called "the trident." This then links it to both the triad of energies in the Heart and hence to the triangle, symbolic of the Goddess's vulva. This is appropriate for the central phoneme of the heart of emission *mantra*, as the vulva, as David White has emphasized, is the abode of emission, or

creation, and bliss. Through a rite of transmission, effected at the locus which is the vulva of the *yoginī*, the yogin was re-created and experienced bliss; that is he was reborn, attaining the body of Śiva and Śakti in union and thus experienced the bliss of enlightenment as he became part of the stream whose source is Śakti.[82]

In Abhinavagupta's hermeneutics of consciousness, the phoneme *AU* does indeed becomes the "central, pulsating core" of the *mantra* that it vitalizes precisely because it symbolizes the Goddess and in particular the Goddess's vulva.

This concludes AG's semantic analysis of the *mantra SAUḤ*, one that is very different from the one offered in *TĀ* 4. When taken together the implication is that even when AG is discussing high metaphysics, as he does in *TĀ* 4, he is still thinking of reflexive awareness, that arises when one journeys back to the heart, in terms of the very emission and resorption that occurs during sexual union. I will return to this idea in the next chapter.

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[81] My translation of Silburn, *VBh*, pp. 109-110. Silburn is relying on the following: *TĀ* 3.105 ff. and 3.171 comm., p. 171.

[82] White, "Tantric Sects and Tantric Sex," pp. 262-263.

KhPhREṂ, the Heart of Resorption *Mantra* (TĀ 4.189b-191a)

Having presented the heart of emission *mantra*, AG now presents its counterpart, the *KhPhREṂ mantra*, also known as the "heart of resorption" (*saṃhārahṛdaya*) *mantra*.[83] The *mantra* is also referred to as "Seed of Resorption" and "Lord of the Microcosmic Body" (*piṇḍanātha*).[84] The sense of this name is that the Godhead emanates into the microcosmic body of the practitioner, who participates in the Godhead through his practices.[85] As with the *SAUḤ mantra*, the *KhPhREṂ* also may be interpreted metaphysically, cosmologically, and soteriologically. Taken together in fact, as Padoux has noted, the *mantras* reflect the whole tantric cosmology assumed by AG: God simultaneously emits and resorbs, and the totality must ultimately return to God. Whereas with *SAUḤ* the emission process was symbolized, it is the resorption process that is particularly embodied by *KhPhREṂ*. Further, paralleling this movement is the return of the yogin to God through the *Mantra*. Thus, the process of return is symbolized and

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[83] This paragraph is a summary of Padoux, *Vāc*, pp. 422-4. See also *TĀ* 5.75-8 and 30.45-6 and *MVT* 8.39-43: noted by Padoux, *Vāc*, p. 423.

[84] See Padoux, *Vāc*, pp. 422-424.

[85] David White, personal communication.

[86] See also *TĀ* 4.181b-182a.

[87] *TĀ* 4.189b-191a:

embodied in the heart of resorption *mantra*. The *KhPhREṂ mantra* is said to be unutterable. This *mantra* is appropriately unutterable: one would expect this of a *mantra* that is the essence of supreme consciousness. Further, the mantra literally can not be pronounced. It does not need to be pronounced however; for *uccāra* is to represent in one's mind the parts of the *mantras* associated with movement of breath, and allow the symbolic meaning to affect oneself. The goal for the yogin is to realize and identify with the cosmic process; and merely pronouncing a *mantra* would not do this. Abhinavagupta describes this process of dissolution as the external real world being dissolved in the fire of knowledge, so that the internal primordial sound, the reflexive awareness of "I," resonating internally, is all that remains.[86]

> That reality precisely, whose form is external at first, is dissolved in the fire of consciousness [the phoneme *R*], having as left immediately afterwards the reflexive awareness which is internally resounding [the phoneme *Ph*]. The sky-nature state [the phoneme *Kh*] is attained; because of abiding in the three-fold energy [the phoneme *E*], having gone to the state of knowing [the phoneme *Ṃ*], [it] is dissolved in the Self of resorption.[87]

So while encrypting the *mantra*, AG is also discussing metaphysics; he is having an intelligent discussion on Bhairava consciousness.[88]

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[88] Muller-Ortega elegantly demonstrated this in a presentation delivered at the University

However, like the emission-*mantra* the resorption-*mantra* also is the *mantra* of Parā and we would expect AG's semantic analysis either here or elsewhere to also reveal its sexual roots. While I have not completely decoded the *mantra*, I would like to point to three hints that this is in fact the case.

First, the central phoneme here, *E*, like the central phoneme of the *SAUḤ mantra*, is also symbolic of the vulva of the Goddess. Secondly, this *mantra* is also referred to as "Mātṛsadbhāva." In AG's high hermeneutics, this term means "Essence of the Conscious Beings." However, its primary meaning is "real stuff of the Mothers," i.e., the sexual fluid of the Goddesses. Most likely, AG has not abandoned this primary meaning. Finally, this *mantra* along with its partner, is described as embodying vitality, which is an encoding of sexual fluid. I now turn to AG's final verses which specifically refer to this vitality.

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of Virginia, entitled "Mantric Encoding: Śiva's Playful Matrix of Power," on April 5, 1996.
[89] Jayaratha: "not only of the two glorious (*mantras*), the supreme seed and the lord of the microcosm."

Reflexive Awareness as the Virility of the Pulsating Heart (*TĀ* 4.192a-193b)

At verses 192a-3b, Abhinavagupta states that Reflexive Awareness, authentic and pure, is not only the heart of the two *mantras* being discussed, but indeed the heart of all *mantras*,[89] the "I," the "light-ness" or brilliance (*prakāśatā*) of light (*prakāśa*), i.e., the consciousness-factor of the Light. Before discussing other meanings of the pulsating heart and vitality, I want to discuss how these notions make sense in terms of consciousness.

Just as Light is made alive by Reflexive Awareness, so too Reflexive Awareness is what makes the *mantras* come alive; the *mantras* are infused with consciousness. Without Reflexive Awareness, *mantras* are dead, i.e., they are like creatures without heart. Being infused with consciousness is what makes *mantras* effective. As Muller-Ortega puts it, the *mantras* contain within themselves salvational energy, directly related to pure "I"-consciousness, the ultimate consciousness, out of which and into which all experiences and perceptions arise and dissolve.[90] Abhinavagupta writes:

> The uncreated and pure reflexive awareness (*parāmarśa*) which is the form of these [the two *mantras* that are being discussed in this section],[91] they [the Masters][92] say to be the "I" (*aham*), this precisely [is] the "light-ness" (*prakāśatā*) of the light (*prakāśa*). The force (*vīrya*)

[90] Muller-Ortega, *Triadic Heart*, p. 160.
[91] Gnoli, *LDSS*, p. 176.
[92] Gnoli, *LDSS*, p. 176.

> of these [two *mantras*] indeed consists of the nature of the heart of all *mantras*. Without this [without potency, whose nature is the reflexive awareness of the "I"][93] they would be insentient, like living beings without heart."[94]

This vitality then is the principle of pure consciousness, the reflexive awareness of the "I." The notion that consciousness or light is not inert has been seen in other contexts. Its capacity to be reflexively aware makes it "alive and powerful."[95] The use of the term "heart" is also significant in terms of consciousness. Pure "I" Consciousness is the Supreme Heart; and the two *mantras* that embody it the most are the two Heart *mantras*.[96] Also, the notion of "creature without heart" is best contrasted with "creature with a heart" (*sahṛdaya*),[97] or with the state of ultimate realization, sometimes termed *hṛdayaṅgamībhutā*, i.e., "[having] become something that moves in the Heart."[98] In glossing "insentient," Jayaratha tells us that this is something that does not vibrate and that is unable to effect anything. We

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[93] Jayaratha.
[94] *TĀ* 4.192a-193b:
etadrūpaparāmarśamakṛtrimamanābilam/
ahamityāhureṣaiva prakāśasya prakāśatā//192//
etadvīryaṃ hi sarveṣāṃ mantrāṇāṃ hṛdayātmakam/
vinānena jaḍāste syurjīvā iva vinā hṛdā//193//
[95] Muller-Ortega, *Triadic Heart*, p. 96.
[96] Padoux, *Vāc*, pp. 416ff.
[97] See Muller-Ortega, *Triadic Heart*, p. 150.
[98] Muller-Ortega's translation: see Muller-Ortega, *Triadic Heart*, pp. 2 and 183.

are reminded here of AG when he says that without vibration there is no consciousness.[99]

Vitality of *Mantras*

It has been seen that while discussing the vitality (*vīrya*) of a *mantra,* where *mantra* is understood as pure consciousness, AG identifies this vitality with reflexive awareness. This is a very important clue to AG's understanding of consciousness and it is necessary to dwell now on the sense given to "vitality" by Abhinavagupta. We will be aided by this clue when we look at how the term is used elsewhere.

A primary meaning for the term is "virility" and in particular the "virility of semen," the "vitality or vital essence of semen." Some natural questions then are: what is the relationship between the vital essence of semen and consciousness? Was AG aware of these primary meanings and purposely using such a term to charge his discourse with such meanings? In other words, is AG's understanding of reflexive awareness, and hence ultimately his understanding of Ultimate Reality, derived from this particular sense of vitality as "vital essence of semen"? These questions can be answered more fully by looking at other references to this term by AG. These references may be found in *TĀ* 3, 23, 29, and 35.

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[99] Muller-Ortega, *Triadic Heart*, p. 146.

Vitality in *TĀ* 3

In *TĀ* 3, AG connects Vitality to Language-Consciousness, where AG paraphrases the *Aitareyāraṇyaka*, connecting Vitality with Emission, describing the essence of Vitality as "the wish to emit." These connections along with the various references in a very succinct passage clearly refer to the vital essence of semen. Thus, AG refers to its fusion with blood, symbolic of the female in general and to female sexual fluid in particular; he also describes it as the strength of life, and as giving rise to offspring. Indeed, it is the fluid of fertilization, expanding and transmitting life throughout the universe:

> The energy of emission as the cause of the totality is discussed in detail in the *Aitareyāraṇyaka* by the Supreme Lord.[100] Fire is red [blood]; the body of sun and moon is the vitality [semen]. [The Phoneme] *A*, the Supreme Brahman, rises from the banging together of those.[101] Also, the supreme vitality of that [Brahman] has the nature of the five elements, whose form is food that is to be enjoyed, and whose nature is sound, touch, and taste.[102] Also, from the sweet sound there is the accumulating of vitality. The vitality indeed is understood as supreme and pure, and as whose nature is the desire to emit.[103] That [vitality] is the strength, the might, the breaths of

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[100] *TĀ* 3.226a-226b:
visargaśaktirviśvasya kāraṇaṃ ca nirūpitā/
aitareyākhyavedānte parameśena vistarāt//226//
[101] *TĀ* 3.227a-227b:
yallohitaṃ tadagniryadvīryaṃ sūryenduvigraham/
a iti brahma paramaṃ tatsaṃghaṭṭodayātmakam//227//
[102] *TĀ* 3.228a-228b:
tasyāpi ca paraṃ vīrya pañcabhūtakalātmakam/
bhogyatvenānnarūpaṃ ca śabdasparśarasātmakam//228//
I am reading *vīrya* as *vīryaṃ*.
[103] *TĀ* 3.229a-229b:
śabdo'pi madhuro yasmādvīryopacayakārakaḥ/

> life, and the beauty.[104] From that [vitality] those offsprings are said to be vitality in action, sacrifice and so on; moreover that [vitality] [is] in the rain, in the field of plants; then again those [are] in the vitality and that [is] in the offsprings. Thus, in the emission, [there exists] the state of having the body of the totality.[105]

AG then clearly use the term with its primary meaning of "vitality of semen" here. Interestingly, his references to sweet sound and beauty suggest he is also thinking aesthetically; in particular, he evokes the notion of "liquid bliss" (*rasa*), the stuff of music and other forms of beauty, transmitted from one consciousness to another, to continually regenerate the original consciousness, giving rise to joy. I will return to the notion of liquid bliss in my conclusion.

What is perhaps most interesting is that in the same line of discussion, he goes on to connect this vitality or emission with language and consciousness. In particular, he links it to his understanding of the Mass of Sounds, the Creative Sonic Matrix, and the Phonematic Garland.

The Mass of Sounds is vital and emissive; it gives rise to the universe precisely in sexual union with the Creative Sonic Mother or Phonematic Garland, the matrix-potential of all sounds, words, meanings, and objects:

> That [emission] precisely is called the "Mass of Sounds;" and [on the other hand] she is known as the "Creative Sonic Mother"; from the penetration of [these two] the agitated and the agitator, she is

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taddhi vīryaṃ paraṃ śuddhaṃ visisṛkṣātmakaṃ matam//229//

[104] *TĀ* 3.230a:
tadbalaṃ ca tadojaśca te prāṇāḥ sā ca kāntatā/

[105] *TĀ* 3.230b-231b:
tasmādvīryātprajāstāśca vīrya karmasu kathyate//230//
yajñādikeṣu tadvṛṣṭau sauṣadhiṣvatha tāḥ punaḥ/
vīrye tacca prajāsvevaṃ visarge viśvarūpatā//231//

> understood as the "Phonematic Garland."[106] The Garland indeed, beautiful in rising from the emission of the coming together of seed and *yoni*, is understood as the supreme energy, whose body is the totality.[107]

Thus, what AG has clearly done is used the notions of the vitality of semen and its power to generate through sexual union to describe nothing less than the generation of the universe, simultaneously conceived as a universe of words and their meanings formed out of consciousness itself, the ground of language.

AG's connections were deliberate. He is not simply arbitrarily putting these two notions, sexual union and consciousness, together. Certainly, as Sanderson has shown, part of what AG is doing is overcoding Trika ritual, and that includes the ritual of sexual union. More than that however, he does it in a meaningful way. In other words, AG makes these connections because they are meaningful to him, they make sense. What is the implication then? What does it mean to describe language and consciousness and reality in such terms, that is, spermatic and orgasmic terms? AG connects these terms together precisely because for AG,

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106 *TĀ* 3.232a-232b:
śabdarāśiḥ sa evokto mātṛkā sā ca kīrtitā/
kṣobhyakṣobhakatāveśānmālinīṃ tāṃ pracakṣate//232//
107 *TĀ* 3.233a-233b
bījayonisamāpattivisargodayasundarā/

language, consciousness, and reality are erotic, or more particularly, at once spermatic and orgasmic. He is thinking of language, consciousness, and reality in terms of the very concrete substance, the vital essence of semen, and its ejaculation in the context of sexual union. Having its basis in these concrete substratums, AG's model of consciousness is inherently erotic.

AG's notion of consciousness is similar to the notion of *the logoi spermatikoi*, the "generative forms of reason" or "seminal principles" that give rise and vitalize all phenomenal reality according to Stoic and Neo-Platonic philosophy.[108] According to Plotinus, the One Causing Principle, articulates the whole universe, "all that exists and happens," through these seminal ideas.[109] The Stoics similarly understood God as wholly penetrating the universe and continually intimately intermingling with it. God then is both *Logos*, the source of Being, and *Spermatikos*, acting as the fluid of fertilization to expand throughout all creation.[110] Similarly, for AG, the stuff of life, mantravīrya, is nothing less than "semantic sperm," the

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mālinī hi parā śaktirnirṃitā viśvarūpiṇī//233//

108 Richard Field, "Greek and Latin Terms." 16 Feb. 1996. Northwest Missouri State University. 24 Nov. 2000. <www.nwmissouri.edu/~rfield/greek.htm#logoi spermatikoi>.

109 Plotinus. *The Six Enneads*. Translated by Stephen Mackenna and B. S. Page. *The Internet Classics Archive*. 4 Oct. 2000. Massachusetts Institute of Technology. 24 Nov. 2000. <classics.mit.edu/Plotinus/enneads.3.third.html>.

110 *Catholic Encyclopedia*. New Advent. 24 Nov. 2000. <www.knight.org/advent/cathen/09328a.htm>.

generative sperm-like bits of speech floating in the "semen" of everyday discourse. Language and Reality are sperm-like for AG in that through it all objects and meanings are generated by the vitality; continually expanding from the seed-vitality it continues to expand from one consciousness to another.

The passage that we have just considered then is highly significant in revealing that AG did in fact have the notion of the vital essence of semen in mind even when he is practicing high hermeneutics and discussing supposedly abstract notions of language and consciousness.

Vitality in *TĀ* 23

Abhinavagupta also discusses vitality of *mantra*-consciousness in *TĀ* 23 in the context of describing the consecration (*abhiṣekha*) of a new guru, a rite that echoes the vedic consecration of a king by a Brahman priest.[111] In the new guru consecration, a mirror-image or clone of the original guru is created; the new guru reflects his original guru in experience, knowledge, action, and personality. Essentially, the original guru's consciousness is transfused into that of the disciple; in other words, it is transmitted, giving

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[111] Here I am summarizing Silburn, *Kuṇḍalinī*, pp. 100-1; see also *TĀ* 29.225-235.

rise to a new consciousness (this again evokes the notion of liquid bliss). Such a process is described as the disciple being infused with the vitality of *mantra*-consciousness. After the disciple meditates on the vitality of *mantra*-consciousness, the climax comes in the actual exchange of vitality, flowing back and forth between a guru and the disciple. This back-and-forth movement is present in *vedhadīkṣā* and other forms of initiation.[112] Here the vitality flows out of the heart of the original guru, filling the heart of the disciple and then flowing back to the guru's heart, over and over, moving back and forth. Fused with the vitality of the guru in a "face-to-face" encounter, the disciple is transformed into a guru.

The phrase "face-to-face" is especially significant and will be used by AG in *TĀ* 29, where one of its meanings is "mouth-to-mouth," with mouth referring to the vulva of the *yoginī* and mouth-to-mouth transmission referring to sexual transmission. This process of initiation is understood in the *yoginī* culture as Bhairava emitting his sexual substance, which flows through the Goddess to the *yoginī*, from the *yoginī* (sometimes in conjunction with the male guru)[113] to the male practitioner. The male

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[112] See White, *Alchemical Body*, Chapter 10, Part 2; and Silburn, *Kundalini*, pp. 87 ff. David White pointed these references out to me.

[113] See White, "Transformations."

practitioner communes with Bhairava through the partaking of sacred communion; he literally eats the stuff of Bhairava and thus participates in Bhairava, or rather, becomes Bhairava.[114]

The use of the term "heart" is also especially significant and appears to be an encryption for the sexual organ, male or female. This is supported by references in other contexts. For example, Silburn notes that sometimes the guru will act on the "vital essence of semen" with the goal of allowing it to flow internally so that one may experience identity with Śiva while in the midst of activity. In particular, the guru attempts to bring the vital essence up through the *nāḍis* to the *brahmarandhra.* In this process, a central role is given to the heart; and, again, the language here suggests an overcoding of the sexual organ. The heart is understood as having two openings, outward and inward. Energy may flow either way; energy that goes outward is considered to be ordinary energy and inward-going energy is understood as divine. The guru closes the outward opening, so that energy from the heart flows inward only; in this way ordinary energy is transformed into divine energy. Next the guru opens the outward opening,

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[114] White, "Transformations;" and personal communication.

so that while centered in Śiva, one now overflows into the world, experiencing the world as it really is, as identical to Śiva.[115]

Thus, the references to vitality, face-to-face-encounter, and heart, in the new guru consecration rite, as well as the various references to back and forth movements, flowing, and filling all suggest a sexual substratum to this rite. Of significance for us is that the term "vitality," used by AG to refer to the power of *mantra*-consciousness, is at the same time charged with the meaning of sexual fluid.

Vitality in *TĀ* 29

In *TĀ* 29, Abhinavagupta makes his most radical statements concerning Reflexive Awareness, Vitality, and Emission. This is not surprising as the use of sexual fluids are essential to the secret tantric ritual, the topic of *TĀ* 29. Here I want to simply point out the connections between reflexive awareness and sexual fluids; important details will be addressed in my next chapter where I discuss *TĀ* 29. There are three important references here.

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[115] Silburn, *Kuṇḍalinī*, p. 175.

At verses 121a-121b, Abhinavagupta connects Reflexive Awareness to Quiescent and Emergent Emission. On one level, Emergent Emission refers to the sexual fluids, both male and female.

At verses 147b-149a, Abhinavagupta discusses the process of being immersed in the threefold reflexive awareness or emission; and here reflexive awareness is described in terms of Vitality and Resonating (*dhvani*). This threefold reflexive awareness refers to various threefold schemes including that of male, female, and intermingled sexual emissions.

At verses 154b-156a, Abhinavagupta discusses the immersion in the Sky-Going *Mudrā* and eight levels of reflexive awareness described as the unfolding of Supreme Sound. Reflexive Awareness is again equated with Vitality; and the unfolding or emerging of the *mantra* and its vitality are again described in terms of AG's hermeneutics of consciousness, charged by the imagery of sexuality and sexual fluids of the Kaula practices.

AG's description of consciousness here again reflects the transmissions and transfusions of sexual fluids, from one "mouth" to another.

Vitality in *TĀ* 35

Finally I note that in *TĀ* 35 Abhinavagupta's notion of vitality even charges his understanding of revealed tradition. I will discuss *TĀ* 35 in my fifth chapter and here I only want to note that what flows from the guru to the disciple is vitality-consciousness, taking the form of revealed tradition. AG states that human beings are capable of becoming part of the stream of revelation because they possess reflexive awareness; such consciousness may be understood as primordial intuitive consciousness, vitality-consciousness, linking one consciousness to another. Here too then, while discussing abstract notions of language and consciousness, he has an erotic model in mind, as indicated by his references to vitality and fluid.

Concluding Reflections on Vitality and Reflexive Awareness

It has been seen that Vitality is such an important idea for AG that he equates it with Reflexive Awareness; it is the very force that makes consciousness alive.[116] When we consider this statement in relation to other statements that AG makes about vitality, it is evident that he is transferring the qualities of the vital essence of semen to the reflexive awareness of

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[116] See Dyczkowski, *Stanzas*, p. 227.

consciousness. This is seen especially in the encounter between guru and disciple, discussed by AG in terms of consciousness, yet grounded in the very concrete practice of transmission of fluids. The implication is that consciousness, like sexual fluids, is potent and may be infused from one to another. I will talk more about the erotic aspect of consciousness, including in particular this aspect of "transmittability," in my conclusion.

By way of summarizing this chapter, I will let Maheśvarānanda have the last word. Continuing the transmission initiated by AG, Maheśvarānanda also expressed reality in terms of erotic consciousness, as he similarly imagined the flowing of consciousness and equated such consciousness with vitality. Thus, in referring back to the Great Festival, Maheśvarānanda understood Consciousness as, precisely, erotic: gushing forth and carrying away the *siddha* and the *yoginī* to an ecstatic bliss of immersion in unity:[117]

> The great banquet . . . the sacred experience of love, allows [one] to go beyond oneself and acquire the consciousness of universal unity.
>
> The energy, [having] spontaneously reached a sudden intense outburst [of itself], while following the innate tendencies of human nature, rejoins the efficient vitality [the outburst] (*udyama*) of the

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[117] See KR, who also interpreted vitality in terms of consciousness: summarized by Dyczkowski in *Stanzas*, p. 230. See also *TĀ* 28.

Way of Śiva . . . in any energy one is able to find the vitality of the heart, in all its intensity and purity.

When such a force invades the heart, this force becomes a superabundant [overflowing] energy of bliss (*ānandaśakti*) . . . accompanied by a power that nothing impedes since the last traces of social and ethical restrictions have disappeared.

Bewildered [wild with joy], stupefied [amazed], the siddha discovers the infinite field of energy, the freedom unheard-of, of the "I" and its vitality (*mantravīrya*).

Parallel to this vitality, its bliss rejoins its cosmic essence, from which there is the inexpressible amazement (*camatkāra*) as a result.[118]

[118] This is my translation of Silburn's free translation and/or summary of Maheśvarānanda in the *Blossoming of Great Meaning*.

Chapter III Appendices

Appendix I
Translation of TĀ 4.2a-12b: "Purification of Differentiated Thinking"

(2a-5b)

> Those wishing to enter into this nature of the Supreme Lord, about which it has been spoken in the previous chapter,[1] should immediately purify their differentiated thought.
>
> Differentiated thought, having been purified (in the first stage of this process), generates (another) differentiated thought; that also (having been purifed generates another differentiated thought); that also another; (and) that also another, whose form is similar (yet more purified).
>
> With respect to these four differentiated thoughts, the (levels of) purification are, in order: not clear, about to become clear, in the process of becoming more clear, and actually being clear.
>
> Then the very clear finally becomes the most clear.
>
> Further, in (any one) differentiated thought, beginning with not clear, there is also a division of an intermediate stage.[2]

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[1] Chapter 1: noted by Rastogi, p. 197, n. 4.

[2] TĀ 4.2a-5b:
anantarāhnikokte'sminsvabhāve pārameśvare/
pravivikṣurvikalpasya kuryātsaṃskāramañjasā//2//
vikalpaḥ saṃskṛtaḥ sūte vikalpaṃ so'pi so'pyanyaṃ/
so'pyanyaṃ sadṛśātmakam//3//
caturṣveva vikalpeṣu yaḥ saṃskāraḥ kramādasau/
asphuṭaḥ sphuṭatābhāvī prasphuṭansphuṭitātmakaḥ//4//
tataḥ sphuṭataro yāvadante sphuṭatamo bhavet
asphuṭādau vikalpe ca bhedo'pyastyāntarālikaḥ//5//

(6a-7b)

Therefore, strengthened by that which is thus formed as excellent and most clear, it attains a natural form which is immaculate and non-differentiated.[3]

And from this (cause), that Bhairava-splendor, whose own-nature is consciousness, becomes manifest; it arises in those reflecting (*vimṛśatāṃ*) more and more (on it).[4]

(8a-10b)

The following objection might be raised: How could consciousness, the reflexive knower , consisting of reflexive awareness (*saṃvitparāmraṣṭrī parāmarśamayī*) by nature, be the object of reflexive awareness (*parāmṛśyā*)? Because in the creation of such form (as the object of reflexive awareness),[5] that (awareness) would be insentient.[6]

It is said: Consciousness of the own-self, by its very own-nature is full. There is nothing to be taken away from it, and nothing to be added to it. Such has previously (at TĀ 2.8)[7] been taught .[8]

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[3] TĀ 4.6a-6b:
tataḥ sphuṭatamodāratādrūpyaparivṛṃhitā/
saṃvidabhyeti vimalāmavikalpasvarūpatām//6//
[4] TĀ 4.7a-7b:
ataśca bhairavīyaṃ yattejaḥ saṃvitsvabhāvakam/
bhūyo bhūyo vimṛśatāṃ jāyate tatsphuṭātmatā//
[5] Following Jayaratha.
[6] TĀ 4.8a-8b:
nanu saṃvitparāmraṣṭrī parāmarśamayī svataḥ/
parāmṛśyā kathaṃ tāthārūpyasṛṣṭau tu sā jaḍa//8//
[7] According to JR: noted by Navjīvan Rastogi, *Introduction to the Tantraloka: A Study in Structure*, (Delhi: Motialal Banarsidass, 1987), p. 200, n. 2 and Gnoli, LDSS.
[8] TĀ 4.9a-9b:
ucyate svātmasaṃvittiḥ svabhāvādeva nirbharā/
nāsyāmapāsyaṃ nādheyaṃ kiṃcid-ityuditaṃ purā//9//

However, because it is able to accomplish the implausible, because of its uninhibited freedom, that Lord is clever in the play of hiding its own self.[9]

(11a-12b)

Exactly when its authentic nature is not covered, it is the covering (*ācchādana*) of the self by the Omnipresent that is the power of illusion (*māyā*), from which (there arises) differentiation, of such extent (as) the activity of the totality.[10]

In such manner, the manifestation of the Lord precisely is what is known as duality; as the eliminating of that duality, this reflexive awareness (*parāmarśa*) is set forth.[11]

Appendix II
Translation of TĀ 4.109b-122a: "Artificial Worship as Nonessential"

(109b-115a)

Thus, the Lord, for the purpose of destroying the reflexive awareness of duality (*dvaitaparāmarśa*), in some cases continually has reflective awareness (*āmṛśat*) of (His) pure self-nature. This reflexive awareness of (His) self-nature (*svabhāvaparāmarśa*), which is either without the means of senses and objects and so on, or otherwise, i.e., turned towards those (senses and objects and so on), (is) a mental construct, (arising) from freedom. And that (mental construct) is manifested (in

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[9] TĀ 4.10a-10b:
kiṃ tu durghaṭakāritvātsvācchandyānnirmalādasau//
svātma-pracchādana-krīḍā-paṇḍitaḥ parameśvaraḥ//10//
[10] TĀ 4.11a-11b:
anāvṛte svarūpe'pi yadātmācchādanaṃ vibhoḥ/
saiva māyā yato bheda etāvānviśvavṛttikaḥ//11//
Read anāvṛte for anāvṛtte. This emendation is noted by Sanderson; it is not noted by Gnoli, but implied.
[11] TĀ 4.12a-12b:
tathābhāsanamevāsya dvaitamuktaṃ maheśituḥ/
taddvayāpāsanenāyaṃ parāmarśo'bhidhiyate//12//

two ways) with respect to the appearing in the pure and free jewel-self; when its own-nature is to fixate on differentation within the multitude of things, it is called "of the night." On the other hand, (when) that very (mental construct) abides in identity with the self, full of the entirety of things, (then) it has for its nature pure wisdom, equal to (the thought) "All this precisely is I." This mental construct, whose form is pure wisdom (and) whose self is manifest, strikes down in this case the mental construct of māya which is the cause of differentiation.[12]

But that very reflexive awareness of pure wisdom is manifold, (manifesting) by means of bathing (*snāna*), purification (*śuddhi*), homage (*arcanā*), oblation (*homa*), contemplation (*dhyāna*), prayer (*japya*), and so on.[13]

(115b-122a)

[Ablution:] Having blissfully penetrated the totality that overflows with the liquid bliss of one's own consciousness [and become] pure ...

[Libations:] ... he satisfies all the circles of the Paths.[14]

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[12] TĀ 4.109b-114a:
evaṃ dvaitaparāmarśanāśāya parmeśvaraḥ//109//
kvacitsvabhāvamamalamāmṛśannaniśaṃ sthitaḥ/
yaḥ svabhāvaparāmarśa indriyārthaādyupāyataḥ//110//
vinaiva tanmukho'nyo vā svātantryāttadvikalpanam/
tacca svaccha-svatantra-ātma-ratna-nirbhāsini sphuṭam//111//
bhāva-oghe bhedasaṃdhātṛ svātmano naiśamucyate/
tadeva tu samastārthanirbharātmaikagocaram//112//
śuddhavidyātmakaṃ sarvamevedamahamityalam/
idaṃ vikalpanaṃ śuddhavidyārūpaṃ sphuṭātmakam//113//
pratihantiha māyīyaṃ vikalpaṃ bhedabhāvakam/
See alternate translation by Lawrence, p. 93 (check this).
[13] TĀ 4.114b-115a:
śuddhavidyāparāmarśo yaḥ sa eva tvanekadhā //114//
snānaśuddhyarcanāhomadhyānajapyādiyogataḥ /
[14] TĀ 4.115b-116a:
viśvametatsvasaṃvittirasanirbharitaṃ rasāt //115//
āviśya śuddho nikhilaṃ tarpayedadhvamaṇḍalaṃ /

[Ash-bath:] It is said that the bath is an immersion of the body in white ashes that have arisen from the fuel of the totality burnt in the fire of the dancing consciousness.[15]

[Visualization of the burning of the body, etc.:] And who has performed the bathing and satisfied the infinite divinities in this way should then also purify the categories of reality that form the body.[16]

[Imposition of the 'body' and pantheon of mantras:] That mind which distinguishes those [categories of reality] whose nature is Śiva [from Śiva] is impurity.

Purity is understand as the opposite; it is the rubbing away of that [dualistic] thought.

Thus, for the one who sees his own body as being a vessel identical to consciousness, the process of distinguishing melts away. He dwells, as the All-Powerful Lord, in the state of pure consciousness and freedom.[17]

[Self-worship:] Whatever brings joy to consciousness, in any world of the senses whatsoever, that leads toward the true abode of Brahman; indeed it is an act of worship.

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[15] TĀ 4.116b-117a:
ullāsibodhahutabhugdagdhaviśvendhanodite//116//
sitabhasmani dehasya majjanaṃ snānamucyate/
See also TĀ 3.262-4 on feeding the fire of consciousness with the fuel of duality.
[16] TĀ 4.117b-118a:
itthaṃ ca vihitasnānastarpitānantadevataḥ//117//
tato'pi dehārambhiṇi tattvāni pariśodhayet/
[17] TĀ 4.118b-120a:
śivātmakeṣvapyeteṣu buddhiryā vyatirekiṇī//118//
saivāśuddhiḥ parākhyātā śuddhastaddhīvimardanam/
evaṃ svadehaṃ bodhaikapātraṃ galitabhedakam//119//
paśyansaṃvittimātratve svatantre tiṣṭhati prabhuḥ/

> [Making offerings:] Worship indeed is the uniting of the separated flow of reality, with the nature of the free and pure and infinite Bhairava-consciousness.[18]

Appendix III
Translation of TĀ 4.181b-193b: "The Vitality of the Mantras"

(181b-186a)

> Because its own-nature is reflexive awareness (*parāmarśa*), it (Supreme Consciousness, or more specifically, Supreme Consciousness in the form of Mantra) is endowed with a primordial spontaneous sounding (*dhvani*), continually arising, which is called the Supreme Great Heart (*hṛdaya*).[19]

> In the heart, that own-reflexive awareness, in which the entire universe is dissolved, manifesting in the first and last (moments) of the perceiving of things, that has the name "universal," and is called "vibration" in the scriptures, made of a surging up within the own-self.[20]

> A slight moving, this is the vibrating not other than such indeed, as it is the wave of the ocean of intelligence; without such wave, there is no consciousness. The reality of the ocean is the state of wavelessness, then waves, and so on. This (vibrating) is the essence of the ensemble of everything. The insentient universe has consciousness for its

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[18] TĀ 4.120b-122a:
yatkiṃcinmānasāhlādi yatra kvāpīndriyasthitau//120//
yojyate brahmasaddhāmni pūjopakaraṇaṃ hi tat/
pūjā nāma vibhinnasya bhāvaughasyāpi saṃgatiḥ//121//
svatantravimalānantabhairavīyacidātmanā/
[19] TĀ 4.181b-182a:
parāmarśasvabhāvatvādetasyā yaḥ svayaṃ dhvaniḥ//181//
sadoditaḥ sa evoktaḥ paramaṃ hṛdayaṃ mahat/
[20] TĀ 4.182b-183b:
hṛdaye svavimarśo'sau drāvitāśeṣaviśvakaḥ//182//
bhāvagrahādiparyantabhāvī sāmānyasaṃjñakaḥ/
spandaḥ sa kathyate śāstre svātmanyucchalanātmakaḥ//183//

essence, its foundation resting in that (consciousness). That essence is the great heart.[21]

(186b-193b)

In that way indeed this being (the phoneme *S*) (sad), the root of Brahman, (is) named egg of *māyā;* without ascending to will, knowledge, action (phoneme *AU*), it is precisely not called being. From the ascending into that threefold energy, it is emitted (the phoneme *Ḥ*) indeed into the Bhairava-who-is-Consciousness or else it is emitted externally from that (Bhairava-who-is-Consciousness). Thus these beings have as their form being precisely; the threefold energy, the emission, with supreme consciousness, having thrown together precisely, it dwells.[22]

That real (sad) (totality) (sad) precisely, whose form is external at first, is dissolved in the fire of consciousness (*bodhāgni*) (R), having as left immediately afterwards the reflexive awareness (*parāmarśa*) which is internally resounding (*antarnadat*) (*Ph*). The sky/space (*kha*)-nature state (*Kh*) is attained; because of abiding in the three-fold energy (*E*), having gone to the state of knowing (*Ṃ*), (it) is dissolved in that whose self is resorption.[23]

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[21] TĀ 4.184a-186a:
kiṃciccalanametāvadananyasphuraṇaṃ hi yat/
ūrmireṣā vibodhābdherna saṃvidanayā vinā//184//
nistaraṅgataraṅgādivṛttireva hi sindhutā/
sārametatsamastasya yaccitsāraṃ jaḍaṃ jagat//185//
tadadhīnapratiṣṭhatvāttatsāraṃ hṛdayaṃ mahat/

[22] TĀ 4.186b-189a:
tathā hi sadidaṃ brahmamūlaṃ māyāṇḍasaṃjñitam//186//
icchājñānakriyārohaṃ vinā naiva sanducyate/
tacchaktitritayārohādbhairavīye cidātmani//187//
visṛjyate hi tattasmādbahirvātha visṛjyate/
evaṃ sadrūpataivaiṣāṃ satāṃ śaktitrayātmatām//188//
visargaṃ parabodhena samākṣipyaiva vartate/

[23] TĀ 4.189b-191a:
tatsadeva bahirūpaṃ prāgbodhāgnivilāpitam//189//
antarnadatparāmarśaśeṣībhūtaṃ tato'pyalam/
khātmatvameva saṃprāptaṃ śaktitritayagocarāt//190//
vedanātmkatāmetya saṃhārātmani līyate/

This is understood as the heart of dissolution, and the preceding as the heart in emission.[24]

The uncreated and pure reflexive awareness (*parāmarśa*) which is the form of these (the two *mantras* that are being discussed in this section),[25] they (the Masters)[26] say to be the "I" (*aham*), this precisely (is) the "light-ness" (*prakāśatā*) of the light (*prakāśa*). The force (*vīrya*) of these (two mantras) indeed consists of the nature of the heart of all mantras. Without this (without potency, whose nature is the reflexive awareness of the I[27]) they would be insentient, like living beings without heart.[28]

Appendix IV
VBh 68 and the SAUḤ Mantra

This is my translation of Silburn's discussion of VBh 68 and Abhinavagupta's interpretation of this verse with respect to the SAUḤ mantra.

vahner viṣasya madhye tu cittaṃ sukhamayaṃ kṣipet/
kevalṃ vāyupūrṇaṃ vā smarānandena yujyat// [Kaumudi variant: smarānande na yujyate, one is not united to the bliss of love, one forgets it entirely.]

But that one fixes the thought, which is nothing more than pleasure, in the interval between fire and poison. It is isolated then or filled up with breath

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[24] TĀ 4.191b:
idaṃ saṃhārahṛdayaṃ prācyaṃ sṛṣṭau ca hṛnmatam//191//
[25] Gnoli.
[26] Gnoli.
[27] Jayaratha.
[28] TĀ 4.192a-193b:
etadrūpaparāmarśamakṛtrimamanābilam/
ahamityāhureṣaiva prakāśasya prakāśatā//192//
etadvīryaṃ hi sarveṣāṃ mantrāṇāṃ hṛdayātmakam/
vinānena jaḍāste syurjīvā iva vinā hṛdā//193//

and one is integrated with the bliss of love. [Smara takes here the meaning of teh source of love rather than of sexual love.]

This stanza which clarifies the preceding one is a beautiful of the secret language which remains unintellible without the explanation of an initiated master. Moreover, we will see that the practice plays on several different levels which are homologous: sexual union and the rise of the kundalini by using the pleasures of the senses with mystical ends. It is about the man united with a woman and whose thought is absorbed so prfoundly in the play of love that he forgets all the rest of it and frees himself thus from his mental oscillations. The technical terms fire and poison respectively designate the beginning and the end of the sexual act and, on another plane, the contraction and the expansion of the energy during the rise of the kundalini, the purpose of which is to open the channel of the center.

AG elucidates the meaning of this verse [TĀ III śl. 105 sqq. et śl. 171 comm. p. 171. See aussi P. H. comm. au sū. 18, p. 43.] by distinguishing three different experiences of the yogin that he connects to the formula of the heart, the SAUḤ: [On this mantra, see P. S. Introd. p. 47.]

Niranjanatattva, the reality without artifice and immaculate which, subjacent to the other realities grounds them and explains them, corresponds to shivatattva, the supreme category in which the energy of activity is revealed in its greatest clarity and intensity. Its symbol is the trident which contains the three energies in activity.

Kamatattva, reality or category of love is the fire of our verse, which appears during the entrance of the breath into the median way and also at the beginning of sexual union. The visarga with its two points symbolizes this union. It is again named half of Ha due to the fact that divine energy does not appear there fully.

Viṣatattva, the reality of poison or that of the omnipenetration according to the sense that one wants to hear, concerns the union of Śiva and the energy. The phoneme SA represents the end of the sexual union but also the direct rise of the breath up to the brahmarandhra. The yogin has rached the level of the eternal Śiva, [See on the subject of the category sadāśiva, Introd. to the P. S. pp. 28-29.] below the cosmic energy of the kāmatattva. Śiva then assumes the

aspect of teh capacity of illusion which hides the all-knowing and all-powerful essence and for this reason one names it poison. [T. A. III p. 170, l 9 of the comm. on ślokas 168-170.] But viṣa equally has teh sense of all-penetrating reality (from viṣ, to penetrate) for those who, endowed with knowledge, rest peacefully in Sadāśiva; this reality is thus poison only for men who are mistaken about this true essence. [Ibid, p. 168.]

The realization of the three phonemes ... the most venerated of the mystical formulas of the Trika school ... the very mantra of the heart ... makes it possible to enter into the median reality and serves to manifest the I, aham. The differentiated universe S (the kundalini equivalent to the ascending vital breath) finds its real existence only if it rises into the AU, the summit of the brahmarandhra, where the energes of knowledge and activity are balanced perfectly. The yogin sees then the universe appeased in S, at the beginning and the end of sexual effervescence. Arrived in AU--pure energy in action--he projects the universe in the form of visarga or two points A: in the interior and in the exterior, in the the consciousness of Bhairava. The two equalized poles of creative emission from the harmony of teh subject and of the object as well as teh equalization of the contractions and expansions of the energy. [Laghuvṛtti pp. 9-10, T. A. V. ślokas 54-58, pp. 359-368.]

Kāma becomes sensible at the time of the intercourse of the sexes and, in the mystic, at the moment of the union of Śiva and his energy, while, taking consciousness of the self, reaches plenitude.

On the other hand viṣa is presented as the ambrosia, pure existence and place of repose where the differentiated universe disappears, place to which accedes the finite being who is freed from his limits while pentrating in Sadāśiva. [T. A. III śloka 170, pp. 170-171.] With Kāma, the energy was all gathered on itself, but with viṣa, the organs open out and become active again.

Rājānaka summarizes: In substance, these two realities, love and poison, make only one; their union is called prāṇana, the sixth breath which animates and vivifies and fills the five other breaths as well as the whole universe. It is equivalent therefore to the cosmic life, pacified life and detached from passions. [T. A. III, p. 169, l. 12.]

To return to our śloka, one understands after these explanations that the breaths inspired and expired (apāna and prāṇa) are the only ones revealed to the ignorant united in the act of love. On the other hand, those who have recongized the Reality of Śiva, bathe in the cosmic life.

But by what concentration can one carry out the first vibration of the consciousness, this subtle touch of a consciousness in action still undifferentiated. The masters of Trika [T. A. V. śl. 142-144, pp. 457-459 of the commentary.] answer that a meditation on sacred formulas is not essential; it is enought that the man united to a woman fixes his attention on the sound SĪT which she automatically emits at the time when the couple feels pleasure and the shock of wonder. It is hardly important whether the woman is beautiful or contemptible; the man must collect himself completely on the first schock of the impression that one like the other causes in him. One designates by samya, equal, this first shock of the consciousness of a yogin well detached and which remains the same one, wthout being attracted by the beatiful woman or repulsed by theugly one. If he is absorbed at this precise moment in the felt pleasure and that he is concentrated on the sound SIT analoguous to teh creative emission and that his though loses its tendency towards duality, he is introduced into the state of visarga (energy in its pure state) and subjects the universe to his power. [T. A. V. p. 458 and III, comm. on śl. 147-148 which defines kāmatattva and cites a verse treating kāma- and viṣatattva. Extract from pages 148-152. See also śl. 167.]

One can now understand the deep sense of this difficult verse. If the arrived thought becomes dissolved in the bliss of love to the point of forgetting the self and its preoccupations it is isolated, that is to say, it has completely cut off its relation with the double functions of the breath, the contraction and expansion of the coiled, in a word, with all duality: the yogin having eliminated the two poles [These poles are prāṇaand apāna in the inferior way; energy of knowledge and activity on the plane of the energy; subjectivity and objectivity (ahantā, idantā) as for the path of Śiva.] of the discursive life, remains isolated in solitude of his consciousness. He is then filled with the same energy of the breath (prāṇaśakti), or the Reality Immaculate, teh very substance of the fire and of the poison (agni and viṣa), when thosre are rising on teh plan of the infite cosmic life.

Such is the interpretation of the TĀ: That one fixes his thought on the very substnace of fire and of poison (that is to say on the appeased state that one experiences at the beginning and end of the sexual union) or on Śiva and his energy intimately united, and one will accede to the cosmic breath outside of inspiration and experation. Here is the true bliss of love because, united to Śiva, one enjoys all-penetrating bliss (viṣānanda), of a beatitude of cosmic order. [T. A. III, comm. on śl. 170, pp. 168-169.]

Appendix V
References to SAUḤ in the TĀ

In addition to the two references to SAUḤ discussed above in TĀ 3 and 4, references are also found in TĀ 5 and 30. These are my translations of Gnoli's translations.

[TĀ 5]

[Phoneme S:] The primary form of consciousness of the primary consciousness inherent to pleasure (sukha) [All the following words begin with the phoneme S. This first consciousness is therefore this phoneme.], to the amorous cry (sītkāra), to the being (sat), to the good (samyak), and to the equality (sāmya) is, in fact, a touching of the consciousness without-superior. [The phoneme which is alluded to in this stanza is S. The phonemes of the two following stanzas are AU and the emission Ḥ.]

[Phoneme AU:] The penetration in the inside of the three seats of the heart, the larynx, and the lip, characterized by one superior expansion, is the fourteenth phoneme, manifesting in union with the preceding.

[Phoneme Ḥ:] The yogin therefore offering, completely intent on such recitation, the emission, carries the due paths of the dvādaśānta in unity with the heart. The dvādaśānta are two, the nasal one, of the energy, and the one of Śiva.]

sukhasītkārasatsamyaksāmyaprathamasaṃvidaḥ/

saṃvedanaṃ hi prathamaṃ sparśo'nuttarasaṃvidaḥ//142//
hṛtkaṇṭhyoṣṭhyatridhāmāntarnitarāṃ pravikāsino/
caturdaṣaḥ praveśo ya ekīkṛtatadātmakaḥ//143//
tato visargoccārāṃśo dvādaśāntapathāvubhau/
hṛdayena sahaikadhyaṃ nayate japatatparaḥ//144//

This seed is therefore the source, within the central beatific channel, of a movement that, leaving from the bulb, arrives, throught the heart, at the larynx and the palate, up to the superior coil and to the extreme end.

kandahṛtkaṇṭhatālvagrakauṇḍilīprakriyāntataḥ/
ānandamadhyanāḍyantaḥ spandanaṃ bījamāvahet//145//

[TĀ 30]

The mantra of Parā, of which it has been said the extraordinary pervasion, consists in the living S, in the fourteenth vowel AU [and the emission Ḥ]. [MV, IV, 25....] Of this pervasion, has been expounded by Parameśvara, in the Three-Headed Bhairava Tantra, several variants. It, in sum, although in substance not changed, is introduced in several diverse ways. The stanzas 28-36a are a paraphrase of the T.]

parāyāstūkttasadvyāptirjīva sahacaturdaśaḥ/
sānekabhedātriśiraḥśāstre proktā maheśinā//27//
svarūpato vibhinnāpi racanānekasaṅkulā/

"In it the living S can dwell in the breath H or the breath H in the living S. [In such case one has in this very mantra the tow other forms SHAUḤ and HSAUḤ.] They are in fact inseparable, united by a relationship of support-supported. The swan H, situated in middle has two ambrosias S, Kālarūdra Ū, the Lord of the Worlds AU and the emission Ḥ, applied gradually to the six wheels, is a mantra of extraordinary fervency and energy. [SHSAUḤ.] The breath H situated on the stick R, in unione with the energ secret Ī and the will Ḥ, is a mantra whose natrue consists in the great heart, and that, as such, expresses Parā. The following, constituted by one syllable only, has nature also it of knowing in which is expressed the heart of Bhairava,

the mantra, I say, constitued by ambrosia S, single or situated in the ether H, or, eventually joined with Sāvitrikā AU and supplied with the emission Ḥ. This mantra is the supreme heart of Parā. [The same one as J observes of the mantra of Parā already expounded in stanza 27. According to J, AG paraphrases here the T. and therefore he does not have repetition.] Who knows at foundation the reality of things must make use of it in the sacrifice of the union, (around the which is especially) celebrated. Also the other monosyllabic mantras, [see above, st. 28, J.] without members and faces, secret, very secret, are very worhty to be adored, in the ritual of the solitary hero, etc., by superior adepts. They, interpreted in the light of the Kula, are the sources of perfection, in union with a subtle produced precisely thanks to the methods of the Kula. Every man, every woman, O Goddess, should never resist following them."

jīvaḥ prāṇastha evātra prāṇo vā jīvasaṃsthitaḥ//28//
ādhārādheyabhāvena avinābhāvayogataḥ/
haṃsaṃ cāmṛtamadhyasthaṃ kālatudravibheditam//29//
bhuvaneśaśiroyuktamanaṅgadvayayojitam/
dīptāddīptataraṃ jñeyaṃ ṣaṭcakrakramayojitam//30//
prāṇaṃ daṇḍāsanasthaṃ tu guhyaśakticchayā yutam/
pareyaṃ vācikoddiṣṭā mahājñānasvarūpataḥ//31//
sphuṭaṃ bhairavahṛjjñānamidaṃ tvekākṣaraṃ param/
amṛtaṃ kevalaṃ khasthaṃ yadvā sāvitrikāyutam//32//
śūnyadvayasamopetaṃ parāyā hṛdayaṃ param/
yugmayāge prasiddhaṃ tu kartavyaṃ tattvaveditbhiḥ//33//
anyo'pyekākṣarā ye tu ekavīravidhānataḥ/
guptā guptatarāste tu aṃgābhijanavarjitāḥ//34//
yaṣṭavyāḥ sādhakendraistu kulasthāḥ siddhidāyakāḥ/
kulakramavidhānena sūkṣmavijñānayogataḥ//35//
anuṣṭheyāḥ sadā devi striyā vā puruṣeṇa vā/

Chapter IV
Reflexive Awareness and the Secret Ritual
(*Vimarśa* in *Tantrāloka* 29)

This chapter focuses on two sections found in chapter 29 of the *TĀ*, a discussion of the secret ritual. The two sections discuss the ritual concerning the messenger (*dautavidhiḥ*) (*TĀ* 29.96-166a); and the procedure of the secret teaching (*rahasyopaniṣatkramaḥ*) (*TĀ* 29.166b-186a).

Bibliographic Note

TĀ 29 has received much attention by various scholars. Other than Raniero Gnoli, who has completely translated this into Italian along with extensive notes, Lilian Silburn has translated most of the sections under consideration here and has provided an exposition, based on JR's commentary and her own communication with Swami Lakshmanjoo.[1] J. L. Masson and M. V. Patwardhan, and Robert E. Goodwin have made interesting connections between the secret ritual and aesthetics.[2] Gavin D. Flood has built on the work of Silburn, and Masson and Patwardhan, and to date has provided the most extensive analysis.[3] Passing references to chapter 29 may be found in

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[1] Silburn's translations may be found in *Kuṇḍalinī*, pp. 177 ff. On p. xvi, she refers to Swami Lakshmanjoo.

[2] See Masson and Patwardhan, *Śāntarasa*, pp. 38 ff.; and Robert E. Goodwin, "The Play World of Sanskrit Poetry," In *The Gods at Play: Līlā in South Asia*, ed. William S. Sax, 50-86 (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1995).

[3] See Flood, *Body and Cosmology*, especially pp. 269 ff.

works by Kanti Chandra Pandey, André Padoux, Mark S. G. Dyczkowski, and Paul Eduardo Muller-Ortega,[4] and I have included many of these in footnotes. John Dupuche is presently completing a translation of chapter 29 along with JR's commentary; this is to include Dupuche's own extensive notes and comments.[5] Finally, Goodwin offers the following references to primary sources related to *TĀ* 29:[6] *VBh* 69-75, *PTV*, pp. 39-52,[7] and a description of the "Great Festival" (*mahotsava*) found in the *MAM*.[8]

Background

To understand the secret ritual of *TĀ* 29 it is necessary to understand that AG's worldview is rooted in the *yoginī*-related practices of two heterodox cultures: the Kāpālika Cremation Grounds Culture and the Kaula Erotico-Mystical Culture. These are also referred to as simply "Kula" and "Kaula,"[9] and I will often refer to these two cultures together as "Kula/Kaula."

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[4] I am especially referring to Pandey, *Abhinavagupta;* Padoux, *Vāc;* Dyczkowski, *Aphorisms; Stanzas;* and *Doctrine;* and Muller-Ortega, *Triadic Heart.*

[5] From an email sent to "Indology Listserv" from John Dupuche on 7 Mar. 1998.

[6] Again, these references are first noted by Goodwin, "Play World," pp. 76-77, n. 9; I have emended his page numbers for the *PTV* (see below).

[7] *PTV*, p. 39, l. 9 (beginning *khe brahmaṇi*) to p. 52, l. 10 (ending *uktanayena*). The transliterated Sanskrit text may be found in Raniero Gnoli, *Il Commento di Abhinavagupta alla* Parātriṃśikā. *Parātriṃśikātattvavivaraṇam*, traduzione e testo, Serie Orientale Roma, no. 58 (Roma: Istituto Italiano per il Medio ed Estremo Oriente, 1958) on p. 199, l. 15 to p. 204, l. 12; Gnoli's translation is on pp. 26-35. Singh's translation, notes, and exposition are on on pp. 38-53 in *Triadic Heart*. This section contains references to *VBh* 69 and 70.

[8] See my appendix to this chapter.

[9] See White, "Transformations," especially pp. 172-173.

In general *TĀ* 29 AG offers a "hermeneutics of consciousness" of the earlier practices of these heterodox cultures which were primarily based on the transmission of sexual fluids, a practice known as "mingling," referring both to the mingling of male and female partners as well as the mingling of male and female sexual fluids. Male practitioners propitiated female *yoginīs* with various offerings in exchange for their blessing in the form of female sexual emissions or menstrual blood. This was the substance that a male practitioner need to gain entry into the secret clan (*kula*) of gnosis and power, and to become the new lord of the *yoginīs*, flying with them back into the sky.[10] Before turning to AG's description of the secret ritual, a more detailed summary of descriptions of these two heterodox cultures, provided by Sanderson, will provide helpful background.

Alexis Sanderson's Description of the Kāpālika Cremation Grounds Culture

The Kāpālika Culture of the Cremation Grounds was the first of two heterodox cultures essential to AG's worldview.[11] The term *kāpālika* (literally "pertaining to the skull") is derived from the term *kapāla*, meaning "skull." In general, *kāpālika* refers to a group of transgressive ascetics who took the radical

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[10] This paragraph is my summary of a personal communication with David White. See also White's "Transformations."

[11] This and the following paragraphs are a summary of Sanderson, primarily "Śaivism and the Tantric Traditions," pp. 668-677 on the Bhairava Tantras and "Purity and Power," pp. 200-2.

vow of carrying the skull of a Brahman, thus identifying themselves with Rudra, the Brahmin-slaying god, and completely transcending Vedic notions of pure and impure.[12] The first group to do this was the Lākulas. A later group took the same vow; but while the goal of the Lākulas was liberation, here the goal is primarily supernatural experience (*bhoga*).[13] Following Sanderson, I will use the term "Kapālika" to refer to this later group.[14]

In the *Bhairava Tantras*, the new scriptures of these transgressive practitioners, we see a proliferation of rituals, deities, and *mantras*, all designed to obtain these supernatural powers.[15] The *Bhairava Tantras* were so-called because they were transcripts of a dialogue between Bhairava and his consort.[16] These tantras are divided into the Seat of *Vidyās* (*Vidyāpīṭha*) and the Seat of *Mantras* (*Mantrapīṭha*).[17] The main cult of the Seat of *Mantras* was the Cult of Svacchandabhairava; there were three main cults of the Seat of *Vidyās*: the Cult of Kapāl'iśabhairava, the Cult of the Triad of Goddesses (*Trika*), and the Cults of Kālī.[18] It is within these three Seat of *Vidyā* cults, and

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[12] Sanderson, "Śaivism and the Tantric Traditions," pp. 665-7.
[13] Sanderson, "Śaivism and the Tantric Traditions," p. 667.
[14] Sanderson, "Śaivism and the Tantric Traditions," p. 670.
[15] Sanderson, "Śaivism and the Tantric Traditions," p. 667.
[16] Sanderson, "Śaivism and the Tantric Traditions," p. 668.
[17] Sanderson, "Śaivism and the Tantric Traditions," p. 668.
[18] Sanderson, "Śaivism and the Tantric Traditions," pp. 672-677.

a related fourth cult, the cult of *yoginīs*,[19] that the cremation grounds culture of the unconventional skull-wielding ascetics becomes most pervasive.[20]

The Kāpālika path of power arose in relation to an orthodox path of purity.[21] Although the orthodoxy created boundaries that supposedly protected the inside from the outside (the pure self from the impure self, and pure space from impure space), these boundaries were only inviolable in the imaginations of the orthodoxy; female forces lurking outside, dwelling in the zone of exclusion, threatened to break down the walls, invading the pure male selves and the pure male spaces.[22] If one were not watching carefully enough, the sinister female forces could suck the life right out of them, devouring their vital juices.[23]

Not everyone, however, feared for their life. "Quasi-shamanic" visionaries, adepts of impurity, felt at home within this "powerful darkness" of foreign feminine forces. Intimately familiar with the systems of emanation

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[19] The description of the cremation grounds culture given below follows the section in Sanderson, "Purity and Power," pp. 200-2 entitled "Power through impurity: the culture of the cremation grounds"; and "Śaivism and the Tantric Traditions," pp. 668-679 on the Bhairava Tantras, especially pp. 670-677 on the Seat of the Vidyās, the three main cults and the associated cult of the *yoginīs*.
[20] Sanderson, "Śaivism and the Tantric Traditions," pp. 670 and 679.
[21] See Sanderson, "Purity and Power," pp. 192-193 and 205, and p. 211, n. 60 for a description of the terms "heterodox" and "orthodox," and for a description of the ideal orthodox Brahman.
[22] Sanderson, "Purity and Power," p. 200.
[23] Sanderson, "Purity and Power," p. 200. See also Sanderson, "Purity and Power," p. 213, note 89 on these life-devouring vampires.

and the hierarchies of power within this other world of impurity, the visionaries could journey to the very center of the whirlwind of energies, protecting the innocent and the uninitiated from these wild, powerful, and dangerous spirits.[24] Further, there was another side to these powerful forces. They had a positive use. They could be assimilated, with their power being transformed into human power, or, rather, super-human power. Visionaries seeking this power and knowing how to maneuver within this new terrain

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[24] Sanderson, "Purity and Power," p. 201. The terms "quasi-shamanic" and "powerful darkness" are taken from Paul Eduardo Muller-Ortega, "The Power of the Secret Ritual: Theoretical Formulations from the Tantra," *Journal of Ritual Studies* 4, no. 2 (Summer 1990): 41-59; and "Foreword" in *The Yoga of Delight, Wonder, and Astonishment*, trans. Jaideva Singh.

[25] Sanderson, "Purity and Power," p. 201.

[26] Sanderson, "Purity and Power," p. 201.

[27] These are what the orthodoxy valued most. See Sanderson, "Purity and Power," pp. 193 and 200.

[28] This description follows Sanderson, "Purity and Power," p. 201 and also Sanderson, "Śaivism and the Tantric Traditions," pp. 670-1.

[29] Sanderson, "Śaivism and the Tantric Traditions," p. 671; and Sanderson, "Purity and Power," p. 201.

[30] Sanderson, "Śaivism and the Tantric Traditions," p. 680.

[31] Sanderson, "Purity and Power," p. 201.

[32] Sanderson, "Purity and Power," p. 201. See also Sanderson, "Śaivism and the Tantric Traditions, p. 680.

[33] Sanderson, "Śaivism and the Tantric Traditions," p. 680. See also Sanderson, "Trika," p. 15, on the cult of the eight mother goddesses.

[34] Sanderson, "Śaivism and the Tantric Traditions," p. 680; and Sanderson, "Purity and Power," 201-2.

[35] This paragraph follows Sanderson, "Purity and Power," pp. 201-2; "Śaivism and the Tantric Traditions," pp. 671-2; and "Trika," p. 15.

[36] Sanderson, "Purity and Power," p. 202.

[37] See Sanderson, "Purity and Power," pp. 201-202.

[38] Sanderson, "Śaivism and the Tantric Traditions," pp. 672-3.

[39] Sanderson, "Śaivism and the Tantric Traditions," p. 674.

invited Bhairava or Kālī, the controllers and emanators of these hordes of dangerous female forces, to invade their consciousness.[25] In this upside-down, heterodox wonderland, consciousness was no longer the autonomous self of the orthodoxy, but open to feminine and other dangerous outside forces. The walls supporting the orthodox universe, separating the inside from the outside, structure from anti-structure, came tumbling down.[26]

The goal of the practitioner in this cremation grounds culture was to entice Bhairava or Kālī and their retinues of *yoginīs* to appear before them so that they may take on their supernatural identities and powers, becoming supermen. Emulating the fearsome deities they worshipped, the gruesome devotee dwelled in a space of liminality. The devotee took on the appearance of what scared the orthodox most, what threatened life, order, and purity most, i.e., death itself, the epitome of entropy and anti-structure. With death came the relinquishing of control and autonomy.[27]

Ornamented with human bones, smeared with cremation ashes, burdened with a begging bowl skull, proudly waving a staff crowned with a trident that flaunted yet another skull (this one marked with a blood-tainted flag), beating a drum whose rhythms marked time as death, sporting a sacred thread made of corpse hair, securing his disheveled hair with a human bone,

and imbibing fermented juices--this was the night-wandering Kāpālika.[28] This bold initiate dared to hazard toward the most ambiguous and impure of lairs, those beyond ordinary space, the very spaces in which the spirits were anxious to do their own creeping: isolated trees, abandoned dwellings, forests, rivers, crossroads, jungle temples, and above all, cremation grounds.

The Kāpālika practitioner sought to be leader of the pack of dressed-to-kill, skull-ornamented *yoginīs* (*yoginīgaṇa*), thereby gaining access to their power and knowledge.[29] Seeking to meld with the wild female spirits (*yoginīmelaka, -melāpa*),[30] he would invoke them with *mantras* and impure offerings.[31] Having copulated with a consecrated mate, he produced a magical brew of menstrual blood and semen, the drink of choice for the craving spirits.[32] Enticing them with this and other impurities of the body, he would thus attract the spirits out of the sky.[33] With the deities appeased with further offerings such as his own blood, he would then fly back up with them, this time as the fearless and omnipotent leader of their exclusive society of knowledge and power.[34]

In this world of *yoginīs*, there was no clear boundary between the supernatural and the human; *yoginīs* could be incarnated in human females.[35] Each *yoginī* belonged to a family (*kula*) or lineage (*gotra*) of a Mother (*mātṛ*);

there were eight major Mother families. Through divinization, a devotee was linked to one of these clans, of which any human member, through sexual intercourse, could assist the practitioner in gaining possession by Bhairava or Kālī.[36] Thus, on special nights, the devotee would seek out a *yoginī* in his family, again with the goal of procuring knowledge and power.[37]

The Trika's cult of entry is a development of the *yoginī* tradition. Levels of manifestation of the universe are understood in terms of the network of *yoginīs* (*yoginījāla*). At the grossest level of manifestation, the *yoginīs* correspond to the sense data of individual consciousness; this level is understood as the transformation of the subtlest level, the core of the deity's power. The goal is to reach the heart of the *yoginī* network, the triad of goddesses, Parā, Parāparā,

and Aparā, by traversing in reverse through the hierarchical cosmic emanation, thus achieving liberation and power.[38] On one level, Parā is one of the three goddesses; on a higher level, Parā transcends the three, as Mātṛsadbhāva ("Essence of the Mothers"). Such notions would be interpreted later according to a hermeneutic of consciousness.[39]

Alexis Sanderson's Description of Kaula Eroticism

Kaula eroticism was also essential to Abhinavagupta's Trika system.[40] This culture was itself rooted in the cremation grounds culture that thrived on impurity in its mortuary form; in the Kaula culture, impurity in its erotic aspect is emphasized. This is important for Abhinavagupta who, in addressing the householders (*gṛhastha*), emphasizes the erotic aspect of impurity, rather than the mortuary aspect cultivated by the ascetics of the cremation grounds.[41] Kaula erotico-mysticism was a reformation of the *yoginī* cults of the cremation grounds culture.[42] Certain practices were eliminated and others, in particular, the sexual practices, took on new meaning. The practice of sexual intercourse with a messenger (*dūtī*) became the focus of the Kaula culture, acquiring an aesthetic meaning. Orgasm was not merely a means of producing the highly prized sexual fluids to satisfy the deities. Although the sexual fluids retained their magical power, now orgasm itself became a way of access into a blissful and higher state of consciousness. Through orgasm, the deities penetrated and destroyed the practioner's ego.

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[40] This and the following paragraphs are primarily based on Sanderson's discussion in "Śaivism and the Tantric Traditions," pp. 679-680.
[41] Sanderson, "Maṇḍala," p. 202. On the connection to the householders, see Sanderson, "Maṇḍala," p. 212; and Sanderson, "Shaivism and the Tantric Traditions," p. 682.
[42] Sanderson, "Śaivism and the Tantric Traditions," p. 679.

Eating impure substances was interpreted similarly.[43] The *yoginīs* became the deities of the practitioner's senses (*karaṇeśvarīs*), taking great delight in anything impressing on his senses.[44] Such reveling had either negative or positive consequences. If the ego of the person remained so that he experienced desire, then he became merely the victim of the *yoginīs*. If he were able to resist temptation and transcend his ego, then the external forms were no longer experienced as grossly other, as outside himself; rather, they were interpreted as the aesthetic form of his own inner cognition. Thus, in this new culture, one appeased the deities, not only by feeding them impure substances, but through intense experience itself.[45] Sanderson concludes that these *yoginīs* were still as thirsty as their predecessors, but in a sense they acquired a more subtle taste; and now delighting in the nectar-like offerings of intense pleasure, they interfused with the practitioners innermost self, now understood as the Lord of the Cosmic Body of Power (*kuleśvara*), the Bhairava in the Sky of Consciousness (*cidvyomabhairava*).[46]

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[43] Sanderson, "Śaivism and the Tantric Traditions," p. 680.

[44] This paragraph follows Sanderson, "Śaivism and the Tantric Traditions," p. 680.

[45] See also Sanderson, "Purity and Power," p. 205; and on the "transcendence of orthodox inhibition and extrincisim," see Sanderson, "Purity and Power," pp. 199 ff."

Terminology

Primary Wheel and Secondary Wheels

For AG, human sexual union is a reflection of the union of Śiva and Śakti on the divine level and thus may be used as a means of realizing the union of Śiva and Śakti, which is none other than Supreme Consciousness.[47] Just as energy flows outward from Supreme Consciousness into the manifestation, so in resorption the flow of energy is reversed. The flow of energy during sexual union may also be reversed and thus function as a way towards liberation. This is explained by AG in terms of two wheels, the primary wheel and the secondary wheels.

Both Primary Wheel and Secondary Wheels have several referents. On one level, they refer to specific stages in the emission and resorption process of Supreme Consciousness; here the Primary Wheel refers to Supreme Consciousness, and the Secondary Wheels refer to the manifestation of Supreme Consciousness.[48]

Further, they refer to both specific parts of the physical body as well as to the energy associated with these specific parts. They also refer to specific

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[46] Sanderson, "Śaivism and the Tantric Traditions," pp. 680-1; and Sanderson, "Purity and Power," pp. 199 and 205. On AG's understanding of the Sky of Consciousness in the *PTLV*, see Muller-Ortega, *Triadic Heart*, p. 144.
[47] This paragraph is a summary of Flood, *Body and Cosmology*, p. 288.

configurations of *yoginīs* in the Kula/Kaula context. They also refer to parts of the subtle body.

Various Terms for the Primary Wheel

Primary Wheel = Central Wheel = Wheel of the Mouth
Mouth of *Yoginī* = Heart of the *Yoginī*
Consciousness = Supreme Clan = Elevated Domain = Domain of Ultimate Reality
Śiva's Power of Consciousness[49]

In addition to referring to Supreme Consciousness, the primary wheel (*mukhyacakra*) is the *yoni* of the female partner in sexual intercourse; this is the source of the primal experience of orgasm. It may also refer to the sexual organs of the male and female partners, taken separately or in conjunction.[50]

Other names for the primary wheel are Central Wheel or Wheel of the Gap (*madhyacakra*) and Wheel of the Mouth (*mukhacakra*).[51] It is further identified with the Mouth of the *Yoginī* (*yoginīvaktra*) or Heart of the *Yoginī* (*yoginīhṛdaya*).[52]

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48 See Flood, *Body and Cosmology*, p. 288.
49 See Dyczkowski, Stanzas, pp. 331-2, n. 9. There he provides various examples of descriptions of the primary wheel or "inner mouth." On Śiva's Power of Consciousness as the "inner mouth," see his references to *VBh* 20 and KR's commentary on the same.
50 White, personal communication.
51 Silburn, *Kuṇḍalinī*, p. 173.

Elevated Abode

It is where the union of Śiva and Śakti is realized, a union referred to as the highest level of consciousness (*saṃvit*), the supreme clan (*parakula*), and Elevated Abode (*ūrdhvadhāman*), Abode of the Ultimate Reality (*anuttaradhāman*),[53] Emissional Boundless Abode (*anavacchinnapadam vaisargikam*),[54] Firm Abode (*dhruvadhāman*),[55] Abode of Repose (*viśrāntidhāman*),[56] The emissional boundless abode is a reference to either the womb of the female consort or the shared experience of orgasm by the partners.[57]

Emphasizing the overflowing of bliss of this place it is referred to as the place of Cosmic Bliss (*jagadānanda*) or Wheel of Bliss (*ānandacakra*).[58] These terms denote then either the experience of the union, i.e., the experience of orgasm by both male and female, or the place of the union, i.e., the vulva of

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[52] See Silburn, *Kuṇḍalinī*, p. 173; and Dyckzowski, *Stanzas*, pp. 331-332, n. 9.
[53] On these various terms see Flood, *Body and Cosmology*, p. 288; and Dyczkowski, *Stanzas*, pp. 331-332, n. 9. Also see the final verses of *TĀ* 29 for the significance of the terms *melāpa* and so on; there the final state of consciousness is referred to as the "eternal mingling" (*satatamelāpa*). JR's commentary on *TĀ* 29.64 refers to a *yoginī*-related text discussing *yoginīmelana*: Flood, *Body and Cosmology*, p. 56. Such terms that refer to mingling will be discussed further in my next chapter. On the term *lolībhāva*, see for example *TĀ* 29.154b-156a. On the term *saṃghaṭṭa* see for example *TĀ* 29.140a-141a.
[54] See *TĀ* 29.117b-119a.
[55] See *TĀ* 29.115b-117a.
[56] See *TĀ* 29.137b-139b.
[57] White, personal communication.
[58] See Flood, *Body and Cosmology*, p. 288; and Dyczkowski, *Stanzas*, pp. 331-332, n. 9.

the female consort, i.e., the *yoni* of the consort.[59] Terms that AG uses to refer to the union itself include: "banging together," (*saṃghaṭṭa*) or "emissional banging together" (*visargasaṃghaṭṭa*), "uniting" or "yoking" (*yāmala, yuganaddha, yugala*), and "mingling" (*melāpa, melaka*) or "mingling position" (*lolibhāva*).[60] Two subtler terms used also by AG to refer to sexual union include: "integration" (*samādhi*) and "seal" (*mudrā*). *Samādhi* literally means "placing together," referring to "the complete integration" of the bodies of the two partners during sexual union.[61] *Mudrā* literally means "seal" as in "hermetic seal" and refers to the seal effected between the sexual organs of the two partners during sexual union.[62]

AG uses the term "touching of penetration" (*praveśasaṃsparśa*) or "penetration/immersion" (*praveśa, samāveśa*) to refer to the male partner penetrating the female partner, which is at once immersion in the highest consciousness.[63] His use of a touching term here links to his grounding the term *vimarśa,* literally "touching back," in the body. *Vimarśa* indeed is the experience that arises through the touching of penetration; *vimarśa* is the

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[59] White, personal communication.
[60] See Flood, *Body and Cosmology*, pp. 288-289. On *saṃghaṭṭa* and *yāmala* for example see *TĀ* 29.115b-117a.
[61] White, personal communication.
[62] White, personal communication.

ultimate touching in that it refers to touching back towards supreme consciousness, i.e., the body's recollection of Being itself.[64]

The primary wheel is the first energy center to be generated by Supreme Consciousness, which at first is all that exists.[65] The primary wheel then is the male practitioner's door to Supreme Consciousness; through the primary wheel only he gains access to the tradition and to Supreme Consciousness. The primary wheel is also the main or inner circle of eight *yoginis*.[66]

Secondary Wheels

In addition to referring to the whole universe of manifestation, the secondary wheels (*anucakra*) are the senses and the energies of the senses.[67] These are derivative of and participate in the primary wheel, specifically in its aspect of being the place of the primordial implosion of the orgasmic experience.[68]

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[63] See for example *TĀ* 29.114a-115b and 117b-119a; and Flood's discussion in *Body and Cosmology*, p. 289.

[64] I take this phrase from David Michael Levin, *The Body's Recollection of Being: Phenomenological Psychology and the Deconstruction of Nihilism* (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1985).

[65] The rest of this paragraph is a summary of Silburn, *Kuṇḍalinī*, p. 173.

[66] This is described for example in *KJN* 8.30-45: White, personal communication.

[67] See also Flood, *Body and Cosmology*, pp. 288-289.

[68] White, personal communication. See also Flood, *Body and Cosmology*, p. 289.

At the time of orgasm, the secondary wheels are understood as rushing towards the center, which draws or sucks them in, i.e., "attracts" them.[69] The energies of these wheels had formerly been scattered, that is they had been primarily associated with external objects in the sense that individual consciousness had forgotten its identity to Supreme Consciousness. Now in orgasm all the energies are gathered together in one center, which itself spills out energy into the secondary wheels, now considered divinized in that they are reconnected to Supreme Consciousness. The experience of orgasm then is the experience of Astonishm[70]ent as all things have been rendered back to Śiva and are now seen as identical to Śiva.[71]

The secondary wheels are also the outer circles of *yoginīs* that radiate out from the inner circle of the eight *yoginīs*, forming a total of 64 *yoginīs*.[72] Thus in AG's system the energy of the senses is an overcoding of the *yoginīs* who became the deities of the practitioner's senses in Kaula eroticism, being satisfied with offerings impressed on the senses, referred to as *karaṇeśvarīs*.[73]

Ritual of the Messenger (*dautavidhiḥ*)[74] (*TĀ* 29.96a-166a)

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[69] This paragraph is a summary of Silburn, *Kuṇḍalinī*, p. 173.
[70] See Muller-Ortega, Triadic Heart, p. 195; I will discuss this again in my conclusion.
[71] See also Flood, *Body and Cosmology*, pp. 288-289.
[72] Described for example in *KJN* 8.30-45: White, personal communication.
[73] See discussion above.
[74] In the *Brāhmaṇas*, the *vidhis* are "instructions regarding the gestures that are to be accomplished, the postures to be maintained, and the formulae to be recited." Charles

(96a-96b)

The Secret Ritual, where one worships with an "outside energy," i.e., where the siddha worships with the messenger (*dūtī*), has been revealed by the Supreme Lord. JR notes that the messenger is only brought in after special preliminaries.[75]

> When one worships together with the energy that abides outside, then this is called the Secret Ritual; [it has been] described by the Supreme Lord.[76]

(97a-100a)

Next, AG redefines what it means to be a *brahmacārin* or "one who moves in holiness"[77] so that what is anti-orthodox now becomes an essential requirement. To perform the Secret Ritual one should be a *brahmacārin* who observes the three Ms (one eats meat, drinks wine, engages in forbidden sexual activity). Such activity leads to bliss, whereas those who are not liberated and who do not observe the three Ms are without bliss. Further,

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Malamoud, *Cooking the World: Ritual and Thought in Ancient India*, trans. David White (Delhi: Oxford University Press, 1996), p. 29.

[75] See Pandey, *Abhinavagupta*, p. 619.

[76] *TĀ* 29.96a-96b:
sākaṃ bāhyasthayā śaktyā yadā tveṣa samarcayet/
tadāyaṃ parameśokto rahasyo bhaṇyate vidhiḥ//96//

[77] See Flood, *Body and Cosmology*, p. 295.

performing the primordial sacrifice without observing them (and being with desire)[78] will result in punishment in a terrible hell.[79]

> It is said, in the glorious *Yogasaṃcāratantra,* one should abide in the moving-in-Brahman state; Brahman is Supreme Bliss, and that [Brahman] [abides] in the body in three ways. Regarding that, two are assisting and the other one is fruit, whose nature is that [bliss]; one who resorts to the three Ms is called "one who moves in Brahman." Beasts without the three Ms are without bliss; those who employ the three Ms in order to effect bliss and who sacrifice to the wheel without the three Ms go to the Fearful and Terrible Hell.[80]

(100b-101a)

The messenger (*dūtī*) should be someone who attains perfect identity with the *siddha.* In finding the right one, characteristics such as caste, beauty, and age are irrelevant.[81]

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[78] Flood, *Body and Cosmology,* p. 293.
[79] On the three Ms, see also Flood, *Body and Cosmology,* p. 295 (at n. 68). On the three Ms and the notion of bliss, see also Pandey, *Abhinavagupta,* pp. 613, 614, and 620. On the *dūti,* see also Pandey, *Abhinavagupta,* p. 613.
[80] *TĀ* 29.97a-100a:
uktaṃ śriyogasañcāre brahmacarye sthitiṃ bhajet/
ānando brahma paramaṃ tacca dehe tridhā sthitaṃ//97//
upakāri dvayaṃ tatra phalamanyattadātmakam/
oṣṭhya-antya-tritayā-sevī brahmacāri sa ucyate//98//
tadvarjitā ye paśava ānandaparivarjitāḥ/
ānandakṛttrimāhārāstadvarjaṃ cakrayājakāḥ//99//
dvaye'pi niraye yānti raurave bhīṣaṇe tviti/
[81] See Silburn, *Kuṇḍalinī,* p. 182 and Pandey, pp. 617, 618 and 620, both referring to JR's commentary. Pandey writes that other Tantras note more than six types and that in reality there are innumerable types. What is most important is that according to the tradition the *dūti* should possess a special state of consciousness, one that will allow her and her partner to gain entry into Bhairava-consciousness.

> The characteristic of the energy is that she is not separated from the possessor of the energy; thus one should find the one that is such, without regard, on the other hand, to caste and so on.[82]

(101b-102a)

AG states that the practitioner's partner should be his mother, sister, daughter, granddaughter, grandmother, or niece; according to JR, these would not incite lust in the initiate and thus distract him from the proper state of consciousness, as would his own wife, who is thus ruled out.[83] JR also gives a "spiritual" interpretation of AG's verses. AG literally states that there are three main kinds of partners: an effect (partner), a cause (partner), and a simultaneous-birth (partner). Silburn notes that according to JR these refer respectively to (1) a partner who initiates the *sādhaka* (one's spiritual mother), (2) a partner who is initiated by the *sādhaka* (one's spiritual daughter), (3) and a partner who is initiated at the same time as the *sādhaka* (one's spiritual sister).[84] Now for each kind, the relationship between the *sādhaka* and the *dūtī* is either direct or indirect; thus altogether there are six kinds of partners. A "direct" cause partner is a partner who directly initiates the *sādhaka* (spiritual mother); a "direct" effect partner is a partner who is directly initiated by the

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[82] *TĀ* 29.100b-101a:
śakterlakṣaṇametāvattadvato hyavibheditā//100//
tādṛśīṃ tena tāṃ kuryānnatu varṇādyapekṣaṇam/
[83] Sanderson, "Meaning," p. 83.

sādhaka (spiritual daughter); and a "direct" simultaneous-birth partner is a partner who is initiated at the same time as the *sādhaka* (spiritual sister); an "indirect" cause partner is a partner who initiates someone who initiates the *sādhaka* (spiritual grandmother); an "indirect" effect partner is a partner who is initiated by someone who is initiated by the *sādhaka* (spiritual daughter's daughter); and an "indirect" simultaneous-birth partner is a partner who is initiated by someone who is initiated at the same time as the *sādhaka* (spiritual sister's daughter). The purpose of the sacrifice is to test the *sādhaka* to see if he is able to control the mind during enjoyment.[85]

> As identity is beyond worldly and transworldly relations, [messengers are of] three kinds: cause, effect, and rising together; such is said in the teachings of the master. [Each of these three kinds may be determined either] directly [or] indirectly, [and this second determination] resembles that [first determination]; [thus there are] three additional kinds.[86]

(103a-103b)

AG then quotes the *Sarvācārahṛdayatantra*, which says that these are the six energies who give both enjoyment and liberation. (According to Silburn,

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[84] Silburn, *Kuṇḍalini*, p. 181.

[85] On verses 101b-102b and JR's commentary on the same, see also Pandey, *Abhinavagupta*, pp. 607, 612, 613, and 618.

[86] *TĀ* 29.101b-102b:
laukikālaukikadvayātmasaṅgāttādātmyato'dhikāt//101//
kāryahetusahotthā sā tridhoktā śāsane guroḥ/
sākṣātparamparāyogāttattulyeti tridhā punaḥ//102

JR quotes a stanza that describes the six energies as being energies that help the *sādhaka* during the rite, with only the sixth energy referring to the partner.[87] This is not what AG seems to be saying however; again he seems to be referring to six different kinds of partners. Whatever the energies are, their purpose is to help the *sādhaka* "become absorbed in the internal organ.")[88]

> These are summarized in the glorious *Sarvācārahṛdayatantra*: they are called the "six energies," providers of the fruits of enjoyment and liberation.[89]

(104a-106a)

(Primary Wheel and Secondary Wheels)

From the two (*sādhaka* and partner) there derives emission and re-absorption; and therefore union is the highest rite. The two first worship each other and satisfy each other. Then the primary wheel (*mukhyacakra*) is worshipped, i.e., the most internal part of consciousness, from which bliss arises, is worshipped.[90] Only this wheel which is the most internal part of consciousness is the primary wheel. All other wheels are secondary wheels:[91]

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87 Silburn, *Kuṇḍalinī*, p. 182.

88 On verses 103a-103b and JR's corresponding commentary, see also Pandey, *Abhinavagupta*, pp. 618 and 620.

89 *TĀ* 29.103a-103b:
śrīsarvācārahṛdaye tadetadupasaṃhṛtam/
ṣaḍetāḥ śaktayaḥ proktā bhuktimuktiphalapradāḥ//103//

90 On verses 104-105a see also Flood, *Body and Cosmology*, pp. 295-6 (at n. 69); and Dyczkowski, *Stanzas*, pp. 331-332, n. 9.

> And from the two there is emission and resorption; thus the fusion is the highest. [The male partner] having taken hold of her [the messenger] and [both] having worshipped and satisfied one another, by the interior process, the primary wheel is worshipped. That which bestows bliss is indeed the interior part of consciousness. That would be the primary wheel; the secondary wheel is other than that.[92]

(106b-107a)

A creative etymology for the term *cakra* is given: *cakra* is derived from the roots *kas* ("to open"), *cak* ("to be satisfied"), *kṛt* ("to cut off fetters"), and *kṛ* (to act"), as this is what the *cakra* does (it opens, it is satisfied, it cuts off fetters, and it acts).[93] I note that at least two of the etymological descriptions, "to open" and "to be satisfied" are transferable to the vulva of the *yoginī*.

> From [the roots associated with the words] "opening" (*kas*), "satisfaction" (*cak*), "cutting off fetters" (*kṛt*), and "capacity for acting" (*kṛ*), [originates the word] "wheel" (*cakra*). Indeed it is said that [the wheel] opens, is satisfied, cuts off, and acts.[94]

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[91] On verses 106a see also Dyczkowski, *Stanzas*, p. 332, n. 9.
[92] *TĀ* 29.104a-106a:
dvābhyāṃ tu sṛṣṭisaṃhārau tasmānmelakamuttamam/
tāmāhṛtya mitho'bhyarcya tarpayitvā parasparam //104//
antaraṅgakrameṇaiva mukhyacakrasya pūjanam/
yadevānandasandohi saṃvido hyantaraṅgakam//105//
tatpradhānaṃ bhaveccakramanucakramato'param/
[93] On verses 106b-107a see *also* Dyczkowski, Aphorisms, p. 193, n. 33; there Dyczkowski notes another creative *etymology* found elsewhere. Also on verses 106b-107a and JR's corresponding commentary, see Pandey, Abhinavagupta, p. 525.
[94] TĀ 29.106b-107a:
vikāsāttṛptiḥ pāśotkartanātkṛtaktitaḥ//106//
cakraṃ kaseścakeḥ kṛtyā karoteśca kiloditam/

(107b-112a: Reflexive Awareness as the Surging Forth (*ucchalana*) or Opening (*vikāsa*) of Consciousness through Satisfaction and Enjoyment)[95]

The process of awakening is initiated by satisfying the senses through external objects giving pleasure, such as food, perfumes, garlands, incenses, or by imagining things which give pleasure.[96] This effects an opening or expansion (*vikāsa*) of consciousness, surging forth of overflowing (*ucchalana*) with bliss,[97] that in turn leads to re-immersion in the Bhairava state.[98] AG makes it clear that the satisfaction of the senses is leading to sexual union as he states the goal is to merge with the primary wheel, i.e., the vulva. AG concludes the first part of these verses by citing the *Tantra of Bhairava with Three Heads* (*Triśirobhairavatantra*):[99]

> And the sacrifice is a satiating with respect to the outside, and that is known as an opening [of consciousness] (*vikāsa*). Overflowing of consciousness [arises] from what reaches to the inside of the wheel and the secondary wheel, imagined by the Śakti-possessor, reaching to the vital breath; or also from the flowing of bliss, from the taking of food, or from external [sensual objects] such as fragrance, incense, and garlands.[100] In this way through shares of appropriate objects, the

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[95] References to *mṛś* terms: Abhinavagupta, 29.111b: *parimarśa;* Jayaratha, p. 3370, ll. 12-13: *parimarśa.*

[96] See Flood, *Body and Cosmology*, pp. 289-290 and 300.

[97] See also Pandey's brief exposition of JR's commentary on 107b in *Abhinavagupta*, p. 621.

[98] See Flood, *Body and Cosmology*, pp. 289-290.

[99] On the verses under consideration here see also Flood, *Body and Cosmology*, pp. 289-290 (at n. 51); and Pandey, Abhinavagupta, pp. 612 and 623. AG also refers to the *Triśirobhairavatantra* at TĀ 29.140a-141a; for another reference to this text see also Sanderson, "Visualization," p. 40.

[100] *TĀ* 29.107b-109a:

> satisfying of the secondary wheels with one another should be done here, towards [the goal of] effecting oneness with the primary wheel. And it is said in the *Triśirobhairavatantra* that one who sits on a stainless seat and in the middle of six wheels, penetrates into the abode of Rudra.[101]

The second part of these verses is essential in understanding Reflexive Awareness. At 111b, AG clearly states that Reflexive Awareness is the expansion of consciousness through enjoyment; such expansion occurs simultaneously with the penetration of the primary wheel by the goddesses of the secondary wheels. Consciousness is described as flowing outwards, and the energy of the secondary wheels are flowing inwards at the same time:

> At the time of the intense reflexive awareness of one's own-form (*nijasvarūpaparimarśe*), [which is] an opening [of consciousness] towards each of one's own various enjoyments, one after the other the goddesses of the secondary wheels reach the center wheel of consciousness.[102]

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yāgaśca tarpaṇaṃ bāhye vikāsastacca kīrtyate//107//
cakrānucakrāntaragācchaktimatparikalpitāt/
prāṇagādapyathānandasyandino'bhyavahārataḥ//108//
gandhadhūpasragādeśca bāhyāducchalanaṃ citaḥ/
See also Silburn, *Kuṇḍalinī*, p. 183; and Flood, *Body and Cosmology*, pp. 289-290 and 300.
[101] *TĀ* 29.109b-110a:
itthaṃ svocitavastvaṃśairanucakreṣu tarpaṇam//109//
kurvīyātāmihānyonyaṃ mukhyacakraikatākṛte/
uktaṃ ca triśirastantre vimalāsanagocaraḥ//110//
akṣaṣaṭkasya madhye tu rudrasthānaṃ samāviśet/
[102] *TĀ*, 29.111b-112a:
nijanijabhogabhogapravikāsinijasvarūpaparimarśe//111//
kramaśo'nucakradevyaḥ saṃviccakraṃ hi madhyamaṃ yānti/
I am reading *bhogabhoga* for *bhogābhoga; abhoga* (literally, "nonenjoyment") does not seem to make any sense here. Note that JR cites these verses in his commentary on verses 29.137b-138a: Silburn, *Kuṇḍalinī*, p. 195, n. 33. For a discussion of sexual union as soteriological in Abhinavagupta and comments on the history of this idea within Hindu traditions, see Flood, *Body and Cosmology*, pp. 283 ff. Especially interesting is his discussion on p. 284 on the

The terms used by AG again may refer to both consciousness or to the concrete *yoginī* practices of early tantra. For example Reflexive Awareness as expansion connects back to Abhinavagupta's creative etymology for the term *cakra,* where Abhinavagupta says that one of the roots from which it is derived is the root *kas,* given the wheel's (*cakra*) characteristic of "expansion" (*vikāsa*).[103]

"homology between love-making and sacrifice." These verses finally tell us what the real relationship between Śiva and Śakti, Akula and Kula really signifies: see also Dyczkowski, *Doctrine,* p. 224, n. 29.

[103] AG, *TĀ,* 29.106b-107a:
vikāsāttṛptiḥ pāśotkartanātkṛtaktitaḥ//106//
cakraṃ kaseścakeḥ kṛtyā karoteśca kiloditam/
On these verses see also Dyczkowski, *Aphorisms,* p. 193, n. 33. *Vikāsa* is also complementary to *saṃkoca;* these are essential characteristics of the Heart and of Vibration: see Muller-Ortega, *Triadic Heart,* pp. 82 and 120. On a related reference to Kāli, see Singh, *Trident of Wisdom*, p. 223.

[104] White, personal communication.

[105] Ingalls translates *vikāsa* as "radiance," noting that this is one sympton of the "relishing of rasa," according to Bhaṭṭanāyaka: Ingalls, Dhvanyāloka, p. 118, n. 3. Also Dhanika relates "radiance" to the enjoyment of the erotic: Ingalls, Dhvanyāloka, p. 228, n. 15. See also Pandey, *Abhinavagupta,* p. 621: in the enjoying of the erotic, all sensual pleasures come together and one's heart blooms out.

[106] See also Dyczkowski, *Aphorisms,* pp. 23 and 78-9.

[107] See Isayeva, *From Early Vedanta to Kashmir Shaivism,* p. 138 and pp. 139-140, n. 8.

[108] Jayaratha later glosses "abode of rest" as *avamarśa.* This is found in his commentary on verses 137b-138a, where he also quotes verses 111b-112a. See also JR, TĀV, p. 3325 for a reference to *viśrāntidhāma-*.

[109] *TĀ* 29.112b-113a:

Additionally, it is clear that Abhinavagupta is appropriating Kula/Kaula terminology. In early tantra, one attracts the goddesses out of the sky through the very type of offerings referred to at the beginning of this section, i.e, food, incense, flowers, and so on; the goal was to become the new lord or center of these wheels of *yoginīs*. This occurred externally, that is, in cremation grounds or in open-air *yoginī* temples designed for such rituals. However for AG, the practice has been internalized: the goddesses of the sky become the secondary wheels understood as the senses; the new center becomes the primary wheel understood as the site of the awakening of primary consciousness, the higher Bhairava consciousness, attained through the mouth of the *yoginī* or the vulva.[104] Such awakening is precisely Reflexive Awareness. Thus Reflexive Awareness is the experience of the overflowing of bliss that happens precisely at the time of orgasm, where the orgasmic experience itself is interpreted in terms of *yoginī*-related practices.

I also want to note that in describing Reflexive Awareness as the "opening" or "blossoming forth" (*pravikāsin*) of consciousness towards each of one's various enjoyments, AG certainly must have had in mind some obvious aesthetic connotations. In particular, enjoyment relates to the relishing of *rasa*. In the relishing of *rasa*, one becomes radiant, one literally "blooms" or "glows."

Such radiance is known as *vikāsa*. This is especially true in enjoying the erotic; *vikāsa* would then be the after-glow.[105]

Jayaratha's Comments

Jayaratha glosses *pravikāsin* as *bahirucchalad* ("intense/great fervor directed outwards," or "overflowing/rising/surging/springing outwards of consciousness").[106] JR then refers to AG's description of the secondary wheels reaching the primary wheel. He describes this as the reflexive awareness, the experience of the exuberant joy of wonder at one's own self (*svātmacamatkārollāsa*).[107] The primary wheel of consciousness is described as having the nature of a knower, consisting of Supreme Bliss, and serving as the receptacle for repose[108] for the Consciousness of the Totality (*sarvasaṃvidviśrāntisthāna*).

(112b-113a)

However, for some practitioners, consciousness does not expand and their senses remain disconnected from the primary wheel. The goddesses stay at their secondary wheels apart from each other, and do not merge back to the center. Consciousness is neither satisfied nor opened, neither full nor overflowing.

> On the other hand, for that one who abides in his own self, since [the secondary wheels] have abandoned the state of being "superintended"

> by the [primary] body, then that one who separates "I" and "that" is neither full nor overflowing.[109]

(113b-114a)

The *sādhaka* and the partner, overflow with energy, or energy-rays which are the goddesses of the wheels, and turn toward each other.

> Completely filled with particles of lights consisting of the divinities of the second wheels, having acquired vitality, the Energy and Energy-Possessor couple turn their mouths towards one another.[110]

(114b-115a)

As they begin to penetrate the Primary Wheel or the Supreme Abode, the couple then begins to tremble; at the same time the goddesses of the secondary wheels unite with the Primary Wheel.[111]

> The union [consists of] excitement arisen from mutual touching during entrance into the high abode; and even though the secondary wheels are excited, they consist of that [union], not [existing] as separate.

(115b-117a)

In this way, their dualistic thinking gradually disappears, as they penetrate Primordial Consciousness; such Consciousness is known in many

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[110] *TĀ* 29.113b-114a:
anucakradevatātmakamarīciparipūrṇādhigatavīryam//113//
tacchaktiśaktimadyugamanyonyasamunmukhaṃ bhavati/

[111] On these verses see also Flood, *Body and Cosmology*, p. 289 (at n. 49) and p. 289 (at n. 50); and Pandey, *Abhinavagupta*, p. 614.

different ways, as the "Emissional Banging Together," the "Stable Abode," the "Without-Superior," and so on.[112]

> Thus, this divine union (*yāmala*), in which discourse of differentiation has gradually melted away, is indeed the "Emissional Banging Together" (*visargasaṃghaṭṭa*) of consciousness; such is the Stable Abode (*dhruvadhāman*), the Without-Superior, whose nature is both [Śiva and Śakti], universal, energetic, and blissful; it is neither quiescence nor emergence, but the source that gives rise to quiescence and emergence, the supreme Kaula.[113]

(117b-119a: Penetration into the Emissional Abode by Means of Reflexive Awareness of Cessation and Arising)[114]

The practitioner is said to take hold of the Consciousness or Boundless Abode (*dhāman*)[115] that he desires to attain. Consciousness or Boundless Abode refers to both Śakti and the *yoginī*, and in particular the vulva of the *yoginī*; it may also refer to the experience of orgasm itself. Taking hold of the *yoginī* is the same as attaining the highest state of consciousness. By

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[112] On these verses see also Flood, *Body and Cosmology*, p. 287 (at n. 47); Muller-Ortega, *Triadic Heart*, p. 140 (at n. 57); Pandey, *Abhinavagupta*, pp. 614 and 643; and Dyczkowski, *Doctrine*, p. 101 (at n. 13).

[113] *TĀ* 29.115b-117a:
itthaṃ yāmalametadgalitabhidāsaṃkathaṃ yadeva syāt//115//
kramatāratamyayogātsaiva hi saṃvidvisargasaṅghaṭṭaḥ/
taddhruvadhāmānuttaramubhayātmakajagadudārasānandam//116//
no śāntaṃ nāpyuditaṃ śāntoditasūtikāraṇaṃ paraṃ kaulam/

[114] References to *mṛś* terms: Jayaratha, p. 3375, l. 7: *āmarśana*.

[115] Silburn notes the usual multi-resonances of *dhāman*: "divine abode, energy, brightness, splendor, majesty." (Silburn, *Kuṇḍalinī*, p. 188, n. 22.)

completely experiencing ceasing and arising the *sādhaka* penetrates (*praviś-*)[116] the Boundless Ground. As noted above ceasing (*praśama, śānta*) and arising (*udaya, udita*) may refer to phases of the cosmic cycle, of consciousness itself, of lovemaking, or to more particularly male and female sexual emissions.

> That one striving to obtain the Boundless Ground, should continuously appropriate to oneself that Consciousness. For in reality, the form of Consciousness, the Goddess, is Boundless.[117] By means of completely "being aware" of the becoming and dissolving of cessation and rising, abounding in such and such, the fortunate one (*subhaga*) [118] should enter into the emissional boundless abode.[119]

Jayaratha offers an interpretation from the perspective of hermeneutics of consciousness, explaining AG's reference to being aware of cessation and rising with a reference to the *VBh*:

> When the object is abandoned, restrained consciousness should not at all go toward another object; then by means of the object in the center of those [two objects], the Intense Consciousness unfolds. [*VBh* 62][120]

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[116] This term also connects the ritual to the aspect of "possession," essential to earlier Tantra rituals.

[117] AG, *TĀ*, 29.117b-118a:
anavacchinnapadepsustāṃ saṃvidamātmasātsadā kuryāt//117//
anavacchinnaṃ paramāthato hi rūpaṃ cito devyāḥ/

[118] The term *subhaga* is also used with respect to the helper; JR quotes one source saying that the helper should be "beautiful" (*subhaga*): Flood, *Body and Cosmology*, p. 292.

[119] AG, *TĀ*, 29.118b-119a:
īdṛktādṛkprāyapraśamodayabhāvavilayaparikathayā//118//
anavacchinnaṃ dhāma praviśedvaisargikaṃ subhagaḥ/

[120] JR, *TĀV*, comm. on 29.118b-119a, p. 3375 (citing *VBh* 62):
'bhāve tyakte niruddhā cinnaiva bhāvāntaraṃ vrajet/
tadā tanmadhyabhāvena vikasatyatibhāvanā//'

JR expounds saying that one enters this domain by being completely aware; and this state of complete awareness is reflexive awareness. JR understands the *VBh* to be saying that ordinarily after leaving one object the mind automatically finds another, and will do this continuously, "bouncing around" from one object to another. The space created by leaving one object is automatically filled in so far as the ordinary, deluded mind abhors a vacuum. In fact, however, it is in this vacuum, that a treasure is to be found, i.e., pure consciousness itself. One should abide in this liminal zone rather than allowing one's mind to be occupied by yet another object. There is a treasure to be found in the emptiness; that treasure is Pure Consciousness itself. Here, in this liminal zone, one should dwell, and forget trying to fill up one's mind with yet another object.[121]

The passage that JR chooses represents one of the most fundamental found in the *VBh*, as Muller-Ortega explains:

> *Māyā*, the cosmic, creative illusion functions to create a veil which conceals and obscures the underlying reality known as *śivānandarasa*, the nectarean taste of the blissfulness of Śiva. . . . [The] taste of Śiva may be had in the *madhya*, the middle or interval: the interval between two thoughts, between two breaths, between two states of consciousness, waking and sleep, for example; between two sensations;

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[121] See also Muller-Ortega's discussion of *VBh* 61 and 62 in the context of his discussion of the "omnipresent center." See also Silburn's summary of JR's relevant commentary in *Kuṇḍalinī*, p. 188.

> between any two experiences whatsoever. Through this crack in the ordinariness of things, the practitioner gains a glimpse of the heart, of the extraordinary state of nondual consciousness.[122]

JR then offers a reasonable interpretation that applies well to consciousness and meditation, continuing his master's hermeneutics of nondual consciousness. At the same time however his reference to this specific passage in the *VBh* gives himself away. As we have seen the liquid bliss of Śiva (*śivānandarasa, śivāmṛta*)[123] refers to the mingling of sexual fluids that one gains access to by means of the primary wheel, also referred to as the "wheel of the gap" (*madhya*). i.e., the *yoni* of the female consort.

(119b-120b)

The emergent form passes from one to the other; the quiescent rests inside.

> The two forms, quiescent and emergent, now simultaneously rise in the energy and energy possessor; the emergent goes to the abode of one and the other; the quiescent goes to the self; but either in reality are indeed the couple; thus the emergent [is] the quiescent.[124]

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[122] Muller-Ortega, "Foreword," in Singh, *Yoga of Delight*, p. xv.

[123] The term *śivāmṛta* is used by both AG and JR at *TĀ* 1.84a-84b and commentary, respectively, while referring again to *VBh* 62: Singh, *Yoga of Delight*, pp. 59-60.

[124] *TĀ* 29.119b-120b:
śāntoditātmakaṃ dvayamatha yugapadudeti śaktiśaktimatoḥ//119//
rūpamuditaṃ parasparadhāmagataṃ śāntamātmagatameva/
ubhayamapi vastutaḥ kila yāmalamiti tathoditaṃ śāntam//120//
On these verses see also Dyczkowski, *Doctrine*, p. 101.

(121a-121b: Reflexive Awareness of the Quiescent and Emergent States)[125]

Here AG discusses the fundamental polarity of quiescent and emergent. The polarity highlights the fact that the *sādhaka* and his partner become Śiva and Śakti, and their union on the human level reflects the union of Śiva and Śakti on the cosmic level.[126] Thus, sexual energy is used as a means of effecting fusion of universal male and female polarities, and in particular sexual intercourse is identified with the intertwining of Śiva and Śakti.

One fundamental polarity, i.e., Śiva and Śakti, is homologized with other polarities on all other levels. These other polarities include:[127] male practitioner and female partner; penis (*liṅga*) and vulva (*yoni, kuṇḍa*); outward and inward motions of lovemaking; male and female sexual emissions (or white semen (*śukra, retas, bindu*) and red blood (*rakta, śonita*));[128] white yogic drop and red yogic drop; emergent (*udita*) and quiescent (*śānta*) aspects of universe and of consciousness; *bindu* and *visarga* as visual representations, or

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[125] References to *mṛś* terms include: Abhinavagupta, 29.121b: *parāmarśa*; Jayaratha, p. 3377, l. 1: *parāmarśa*.

[126] Here I am summarizing Flood, *Body and Cosmology*, pp. 286-287.

[127] Here I am relying on Flood's synthesis of *TĀ* 29.115b-117, 141, and 166-168 in *Body and Cosmology*, p. 287; White, "Transformations," p. 180; and Silburn, *Kuṇḍalinī*, pp. 168-169.

[128] See also White, "Transformations," p. 194 and his references at n. 30.

the two dots of the *visarga;* phoneme A and phoneme H as sounds; and right and left yogic energy channels (*nāḍis*).

Further, in all cases the polarity is mediated by a third term, both uniting and going beyond each of the polarities. Thus on the level of Paramaśiva, there is union of Śiva and Śakti. Essentially then, beyond the one fundamental polarity, there is one fundamental triadic scheme: Śiva, Śakti, union of Śiva and Śakti. This triadic scheme then is repeated on all levels of manifestation. Thus, for example, the white and red subtle yogic drops are united in one great drop; the sun and moon are united in fire; the left and right yogic channels are united in the central channel; and the male and female practitioners unite in sexual intercourse.

What is most significant for our understanding of Reflexive Awareness is that the triadic scheme that AG evokes in the verses in this section (emergent, quiescent, union) refer to several levels. Thus the experience of Reflexive Awareness, the experience of the union of Śiva and Śakti, is also the experience that arises in sexual intercourse through the union of emergent and quiescent forms, or male and female sexual fluids. In other words, the emergent and quiescent aspects not only refer to phases in the cosmic process as well as that of consciousness, but also refer to sexual fluids. Thus, for AG

the emergent form is an overcoding of the male sexual fluid, and the quiescent form is an overcoding of the female sexual fluid. It should be noted also that because in AG's system all polarities are ultimately identified in union, AG will often make other identifications that are different from these two fundamental identifications. For example, later AG uses the term "emergent form" to refer to the intermingling of the sexual fluids.[129] In general, what is important here is that AG uses the term "Reflexive Awareness" to refer to this very concrete level of sexual fluids.

This background charges AG's understanding of the cosmos and consciousness. AG writes:

> Energy (*śakti*), and not the Possessor of That [Energy] (*tadvad*) [i.e., Śiva], nourishes (*puṣṇāti*) the emission (*sṛṣṭi*) that is proper to the Possessor of That [Energy], even though there is a relation of equality with regard to the reflexive awareness (*parāmarśa*) of the two forms, quiescent (*śānta*) and emergent (*udita*).[130]

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[129] JR's commentary at 29.170a-173b explicity states that the male and female sexual fluids (*kuṇḍagolaka*) arise from the primary wheel, i.e., the vulva of the *yoginī*: see my translation below. Also, JR's commentary on 29.140-142 identifies the phallus with the quiescent form and the vulva with the emergent form: Silburn, *Kuṇḍalinī*, p. 195. Further, AG's verses at 127b-129a along with the commentary imply that the emergent form is either the semen or the *kuṇḍagolaka*, the mixture of sexual fluids: Flood, *Body and Cosmology*, pp. 297-298. See also White's translation and exposition of AG's verses in "Transformations," pp. 196-197; and Sanderson, "Maṇḍala," p. 176, n. 29; and "Purity and Power," p. 201 and p. 213, n. 97; and Singh, *Trident of Wisdom*, pp. 210, 221, and 255.

[130] AG, *TĀ*, 29.121a-121b:
śaktistadvaducitāṃ sṛṣṭiṃ puṣṇāti no tadvān/
śāntoditātmakobhayarūpaparāmarśasāmyayoge'pi//121//

In this passage AG wants to emphasize both identity and difference of polarities. This verse makes complete sense in terms of AG's cosmology alone. Śakti, or Energy distinguishes itself in that it is the one that nourishes the emission; in other words, Energy is the active aspect of the Godhead, and thus is the cause for creation.[131] And this distinction is made even though at the ultimate level AG of course equates these two aspects of the Godhead given his fundamental stance of nonduality. AG refers to this identity of quiescent and emergent by saying that the Reflexive Awareness of the quiescent form is equal to the Reflexive Awareness of the emergent form. Here Reflexive Awareness is simply a mode of awareness of the Godhead which always manifests as an event. Thus the Godhead may be in the process of manifesting, emerging, or in the process of being transcendent, being quiescent. These are simply two different ways the Godhead represents itself.[132] This interpretation is consistent with AG's earlier reference to the emergent and quiescent:

> Thus, this divine union (*yāmala*), in which discourse of differentiation has gradually melted away, is indeed the "Emissional Banging Together" (*visargasaṃghaṭṭa*) of consciousness; such is the Stable Abode (*dhruvadhāman*), the Without-Superior, whose nature is both [Śiva and

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[131] See also Dyczkowski, *Doctrine*, p. 101 (at n. 15); Dyczkowski takes this to mean that although the two aspects are identical, Spanda-Śakti is still the active aspect, causing creation.
[132] Here Sanderson's translation of the *mṛś* terms as Representation works very well. See my comments in chapter 1.

> Śakti], universal, energetic, and blissful; it is neither quiescence nor emergence, but the source that gives rise to quiescence and emergence, the supreme Kaula.[133]

At the level of supreme consciousness, what are seen as polarities at a lower level, i.e., quiescence and emergence, are unified.

This passage is understood on another level when we consider what JR has said previously: by means of Reflexive Awareness, one enters the emissional abode. The term "emissional abode," in AG' s understanding, to either the vulva of the female consort or to the experience of orgasm shared by the partners. One implication of this identification is that AG appears to be saying that both the *siddha* and *yoginī* have the awareness that leads them into the emissional abode, the consciousness of unity where all distinctions are transcended. At the same time there still exist distinctions between them (just as Śiva and Śakti are at once identical and different). The distinction is emphasized by the terms "quiescent" and "emergent."

Another way of stating this identity and difference takes us to the level of sexual fluids: both the *sādhaka* and the partner possess reflexive awareness of the two forms. Nonetheless, the partner nourishes the emission of the

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[133] *TĀ* 29.115b-117a:
itthaṃ yāmalametadgalitabhidāsaṃkathaṃ yadeva syāt//115//
kramatāratamyayogātsaiva hi saṃvidvisargasaṅghaṭṭaḥ/
taddhruvadhāmānuttaramubhayātmakajagadudārasānandam//116//

sādhaka. The emission refers to the semen; it is nourished by the female sexual fluid. JR makes this clear in his commentary when he says that nourishing means to make the seed arise (*garbham janayet*).[134] The female celebrant causes the emission in so far as she excites the male celebrant. More than that however, the female discharge enriches and complements the male semen, a process necessary for the male practitioner who can only get the clan nectar (in the form of female discharge) from his partner and who needs it to receive the secret gnosis, to participate in the flow of the lineage, the sexual flow of the Godhead.[135]

Finally I want to note that JR glosses the term emission (*sṛṣṭi*) as "bursting forth," (*ullasita*), a term with obvious sexual connotations that we have seen in other contexts. It is the same term for example that JR uses to gloss *vimarśa*, which is in turn identified with *visarga* in various places.

(122a-124a)

The middle position (*madhyapadā*) of the energy who is the female partner is continuously opened. The guru transmits the secret meaning of the

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no śāntaṃ nāpyuditaṃ śāntoditasūtikāraṇaṃ paraṃ kaulam/

[134] The Sanskrit phrase may also mean, more literally, "to cause the embryo to be born"; this is less explict, but nonetheless would also imply a sexual act.

[135] White, personal communication. Note also that the quiescent emission may also be understood as the external emission, i.e., orgasm, while the emergent emission may also

Kula (*kulārtha*) only to her. Through her mouth, i.e., the vulva, the meaning is transmitted to men.[136]

> Energy is thus described in the sacred scriptures as the one with the opening middle way. Into her [the messenger] precisely, the guru should completely transmit the object-meaning of the Clan (*kula*). And then, by means of the door of that [messenger], in the manner described, [the messenger] should transmit [the object-meaning of the Clan] into [all] men. Thus, the blessed Kallaṭanātha has said, "In [her] natural body there is attained the superior real stuff (*sadbhāva*)." [Such] expression [is] for the purpose of grasping the whole meaning of what has been previously said.[137]

(124b-126a)

The primary wheel (or wheel of the mouth) is called the "mouth of the *yoginī*," i.e., the vulva of the female partner, on which the spiritual lineage, the Trika tradition in the form of the Kulaprakriyā is founded.[138] And this lineage is equated with Consciousness. Such Consciousness can not be put in writing,

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understood as the internal emission, i.e., the internal raising of the conjoined sexual fluids (possibly through *vajroli*): White, personal communication.

[136] On 123b-124a and commentary, see Pandey, *Abhinavagupta*, pp. 582-3. Flood translates 122b-123a in *Body and Cosmology*, p. 291 (at n. 53) in context of his discussion of gnosis being transmitted through sexual union of such gnosis leading to transformation. Flood notes a distinction between two gurus, the power guru and the teaching guru. Flood notes that the verses under consideration here are discussing the power guru, a symbol of the essential cosmic body; just as the tradition comes from its mouth (= guru's mouth), so it continues being transmitted through the partner's "mouth."

[137] *TĀ* 29.122a-124a:
pravikasvaramadhyapadā śaktiḥ śāstre tataḥ kathitā/
tasyāmeva kulārthaṃ samyak saṃcārayedgurustena//122//
taddvāreṇa ca kathitakrameṇa saṃcārayet nṛṣu/
svaśarīrādhikasadbhāvabhāvitāmiti tataḥ prāha//123//
śrīmatkallaṭanāthaḥ proktasamastārthalabdhaye vākyam/

it can only be transmitted from mouth to mouth, from primary wheel to primary wheel, i.e., via the sexual organs; such a transmission is also referred to as "Consciousness to Consciousness" transmission.[139] "Mouth-to-mouth" transmission then refers to a transmission of Consciousness taking place through sexual means. Again, Bhairava emits his sexual substance, which flows through the Goddess to the *yoginī*, from the *yoginī* to the male practitioner. The male practitioner communes with Bhairava through sacred communion, literally eating the stuff of Bhairava and thus participating in Bhairava, or rather, becoming Bhairava.[140]

> That primary wheel is called by the Lord the "mouth of the *yoginī*." From that this transmission [arises]; thus gnosis is reached. This [gnosis] is not to be written. It is "spoken" out of [one] mouth, [then] abides in [another] mouth. And in accordance with what has been said the mouth is the primary wheel. How would one's own consciousness be written?[141]

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[138] See Flood, *Body and Cosmology*, pp. 281 ff.

[139] This section is referred to by Padoux in *Vāc*, p. 266, n. 126; there Padoux discusses the association of the phoneme *E* with triplicity and sexual symbolism; the phoneme *E* is also understood as the "mouth of the *yoginī*." Verse 126a is translated by Dyczkowski in *Doctrine*, p. 256, n. 42 because of the similarity of its sentiment to a passage in Sp. Kā. on not wasting time uselessly discussing the experience of Consciousness. This section and its commentary are also discussed by Flood, *Body and Cosmology*, p. 290.

[140] White, "Transformations," pp. 175, 193-194 and notes; see also Silburn, *Kuṇḍalinī*, pp. 172-174; and Flood, *Body and Cosmology*, pp. 298-299.

[141] *TĀ* 29.124b-126a:
tanmukhyacakramuktaṃ maheśinā yoginīvaktram//124//
tatraiṣa sampradāyastasmātsaṃprāpyate jñānam/
tadidamalekhyaṃ bhaṇitaṃ vaktrādvaktrasthamuktayuktyā ca//125//
vaktraṃ pradhānacakraṃ svā saṃvillikhyatāṃ ca katham/

(126b-127a)

Those who gather together the prior emission attain the Boundless Ground.

> Now in this twofold emitted abode, quiescent and emergent, those who gather together the prior emissional state of being, they are elevated to the unlimited site.[142]

(127b-129a)

Those that want to attain perfection should eat the "emergent emission," the male and female sexual fluids, and with that also worship the wheel of the Goddess. By going from the principle mouth (mouth of *yoginī*) to one's own and then back again, this is how Primordial Emission, known as "Kula," is to be attained.[143]

> Those wishing to obtain perfection should enjoy the risen form; with that [risen form] precisely they should worship; that form is most pure because it is near to Consciousness. Further taking turns indeed, that goes from the first mouth to the [other] mouth, as it is "spoken."

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[142] *TĀ* 29.126b-127a:
atha sṛṣṭe dvitaye'smin śāntoditadhāmni ye'nusaṃdadhate//126//
prācyāṃ visargasattāmanavacchidi te pade rūḍhāḥ/

[143] See White's translation of this and parts of JR's commentary along with his exposition in "Transformations," pp. 197-198. This is also translated by Flood, *Body and Cosmology*, p. 297 (at n. 73). Flood states that most likely sexual fluids are being passed here; his translation indicates that one should "offer the emergent form." Also he notes that *prādhana* = *prakṛti* = cosmological Śakti; thus the *yoginī* is again seen as a reflection of Śakti. See also p. 235 on these verses; there Flood notes that AG appropriates Vedic terms, with sexual fluids now being the offering. Interesting is Flood's observation of the history of equating sex with the sacrifice. On this see also Charles Malamoud, "Indian Speculations about the Sex of the Sacrifice," in part 1 of *Fragments for a History of the Human Body*, ed. Michel Feher with Ramona Naddaff and Nadia Tazi, trans. Ian Patterson (New York, Zone, 1989), 74-103.

> Abounding in bestowing youth and immortality, it is called "Supreme Kula."[1]

(129b-133a)

By participating in the sacrifice of sexual union, worshipping by means of liquid bliss, even less advanced practitioners are able to obtain awakening. Silburn notes that up until now AG has been focusing on advanced practitioners, those "with knowledge."[2] AG now describes the practice for other types of practitioners. These verses also seem to be describing the worship that follows sexual intercourse, in which the genitalia of the female partner are a possible substrate of the worship.[3] Again, the wheels referred to are the circles of *yoginīs*, and the rays refer to the *yoginīs* themselves; and, as mentioned, in early tantra, the inner circle consists of 8 *yoginīs*, from which

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[1] *TĀ* 29.127b-129a:
ye siddhimāptukāmāste'bhyuditaṃ rūpaṃāhareyuratho//127//
tenaiva pūjayeyuḥ saṃvinnaikaṭyaśuddhatamavapuṣā/
tadapica mitho hi vaktrātpradhānato vaktragaṃ yato bhaṇitam//128//
ajarāmarapadadānapravaṇaṃ kulasaṃjñataṃ paramam/

[2] Silburn, *Kuṇḍalinī*, p. 192. Also Pandey, referring to JR's commentary, notes that the secret ritual, in addition to being a test, helps the practioner reach the desired "level of indetermincacy;" one makes the vital air enter the *suṣumṇā* and one contemplates on Śiva-Śakti unity. Pandey, *Abhinavagupta*, p. 607.

[3] Sanderson, "Meaning," p. 83.

radiate the secondary wheels of *yoginīs*, the secondary or outer circles, making a total of 64 *yoginīs*.[4]

> But for those who have not yet obtained awakening (*vibodha*), firmly rooted in the sacrifice which blossoms forth in the emergent, with divinities abiding in the wheel created through that [sacrifice], they will obtain knowledge (*vijñāna*).[5] There in the wheel of energy, with what is full of the flowing of bliss, outside in the four regions, in the order mentioned, beginning with Lord Gaṇa, all are to be worshipped; at the middle position the Kula Couple, the Lord [and His Consort]; and at the three spokes, the goddesses; then outside at [each] spoke, a set of four [goddesses]; the *muni* should worship in order wheels of various sorts: the wheel of rays with twelve spokes, eight, or else eight-times-eight.[6] At the abode situated in one's body, in that way precisely, one should worship.[7]

(133b-136a)

Through the consciousness of the heart, Śiva is reached. Śiva is referred to as the "quiescent emission," which is like a sea without waves. It is said that the deities cease functioning.[8] This is a reference to the cessation of ordinary

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[4] In accord with *KJN* 8.30-45: White, personal communication.
[5] *TĀ* 29.129b-130a:
ye'pyaprāptavibodhāste'bhyuditotphullayāgasamrūḍhāḥ//129//
tatparikalpitacakrasthadevatāḥ prāpnuvanti vijñānam/
[6] *TĀ* 29.130b-132b:
te tatra śakticakre tenaivānandarasamayena bahiḥ//130//
dikṣu catasṛṣu proktakrameṇa gaṇanāthataḥ prabhṛti sarvam/
sampūjya madhyamapade kuleśayugmaṃ tvarātraye devīḥ//131//
bāhye pratyaramatha kila catuṣkamiti raśmicakramarkāram/
aṣṭakamaṣṭāṣṭakamatha vividhaṃ sampūjayetkrameṇa muniḥ//132//
[7] *TĀ* 29.133a:
nijadehagate dhāmani tathaiva pūjyaṃ samabhyasyet/
[8] Muller-Ortega refers to these verses in *Triadic Heart*, p. 149 in the context of his discussion of ocean and wave symbolism.

sensations during the experience of orgasm. The *yoginīs* or goddesses of the secondary wheels are sucked into the experience of orgasm, i.e., the primary wheel or the wheel of consciousness.[9] As Sanderson has noted, in the Kaula context, the *yoginīs* were still as thirsty as their predecessors, i.e., the *yoginīs* in the cremation grounds. Nonetheless, they acquired a more subtle taste; that is they were incited and satiated by the liquid bliss of orgasm, by which they interfused with the practitioner's innermost self; thus the practioner then became the Lord of the Totality Body/Clan (*kuleśvara*), Bhairava in the Sky of Consciousness (*cidvyomabhairava*).[10]

> By having practiced the consciousness of the heart, one reaches indeed the quiescent form, the tranquil Śiva abode, appearing as the sea whose waves have dissolved. From entering that quiescent position, the complete multitude of deities situated in the wheel stand with their activities ceased, touching the empty [state], without bliss.[11] Also sharing in the nature of the secondary wheel, vision and so on, [the divinities of the secondary wheel] also repose in that [primary wheel]; thus immersed in nonbliss they dwell desirous of bliss.[12]

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[9] White, personal communication.
[10] Sanderson, "Śaivism," p. 680.
[11] *TĀ* 29.133b-135a:
yattacchāntaṃ rūpaṃ tenābhyastena hṛdayasaṃvittyā//133//
śāntaṃ śivapadameti hi galitataraṅgārṇavaprakhyam/
tacchāntapadādhyāsāccakrastho devatāgaṇaḥ sarvaḥ//134//
tiṣṭhatyuparatavṛtttiḥ śūnyālambhī nirānandaḥ/
[12] *TĀ* 29.135b-136a:
yo'pyanucakradṛgādisvarūpabhāk so'pi yattadāyattaḥ//135//
nirānande magnastiṣṭatyānandasākāṅkṣaḥ/
I am reading *nirānande* for *tenānande* following Gnoli.

(136b-139b)

The deities, the rays of the senses, filled with erotic longing to taste external objects, go out and begin to gather nectar, until overflowing with the innate liquid bliss, which they continually offer back to the center. This state is the abode of repose, supreme consciousness. All enjoyment occurs in connection with the center. From the perspective of the individual, it is the recognition that all sense objects are pervaded by consciousness. This feasting of the divinities of the secondary wheels initiates a downpour of energies, with the Lord of Energies itself overflowing and bursting forth.[13]

> Without fusion with the supreme's own nature, the multitude of the rays of the senses dwell indeed without their own nature and [thus] wait to enjoy their own nature.[14] With the crying of erotic desire

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[13] Referring to these verses and the corresponding commentary, Flood emphasizes that it is through intense sensation and emotions that one penetrates the abode of repose; commenting on JR's commentary, he states that the objects begin to shine, as they are filled with consciousness. Flood, *Body and Cosmology*, pp. 296-7.

[14] *TĀ* 29.136b-137a:
paratatsvarūpasaṅghaṭṭamantareṇaiṣa karaṇaraśmigaṇaḥ//136//
āste hi niḥsvarūpaḥ svarūpalābhāya conmukhitaḥ/

[15] *TĀ* 29.137b-139b:
raṇaraṇakarasānnijarasabharitabahirbhāvacarvaṇavaśena//137//
viśrāntidhāma kiñcidlabdhvā svātmanyathārpayate
tannijaviśayārpaṇataḥ pūrṇasamucchalitasaṃvidāsāraḥ//138//
anucakradevatāgaṇaparipūrṇajātavīryavikṣobhaḥ/
cakreśvaro'pi pūrvoktayuktitaḥ procchaledrabhasāt//139//

[16] Dyczkowski, *Stanzas*, p. 395, n. 88 refers to this verse because of its reference to the *Tattvarakṣāvidhāna*; see also *Stanzas*, p. 291 on the significance of this text. Muller-Ortega refers to this verse in *Triadic Heart*, pp. 83 and 125, noting that the energy is both centrifugal and centripetal.

[17] *TĀ* 29.140a-141b:
trividho visarga itthaṃ saṅghaṭṭaḥ proditastathā śāntaḥ/

(*raṇaraṇakara*), wishing to taste external things filled with the innate liquid bliss (*nijarasa*), [and] having reached a certain abode of repose, [the deities] then offer it to the self. In accordance with this offering of objects proper to them, a shower of consciousness full and overflowing [arises]; agitation of vitality is arisen from the completely full multitude of divinities of the secondary wheels. And the Lord of the Wheel, in accord with what has been said previously, gushes forth with force.[15]

(140a-141a)

Emission, like everything else, is threefold: emergent, quiescent, and the union of the two. Here AG provides a creative etymology, saying that from the Unitive Dimension, the great variety of creation, the totality, is *emitted (vicitra sarga)*; and then returns back to the Unity (*vigata sarga*).[16]

> Thus the emission is threefold: the unifying friction, the emergent, and the quiescent; [it is called "emission"] since it emits the varied emission and [it is] where the emission returns back. Thus it is said in the *Tattvarakṣāvidhāna*, the *Nigamatantra*, and the *Triśirobhairavatantra*.[17]

(141b-142a)

AG supports this with a citation from the *Gamatantra*: Śakti is the cavity (i.e., the vulva); Śiva is the *liṅga* (i.e., the penis), and the mingling (*melaka*) is the Supreme Abode.[18]

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[18] See my discussion of polarities earlier in this chapter.
[19] *TĀ* 29.141b-142a:
kuṇḍaṃ śaktiḥ śivo liṅgaṃ melakaṃ paraṃ padam//141//
dvābhyāṃ sṛṣṭiḥ saṃhṛtistadvisargastrividho game/
[20] On these verses see also Pandey, *Abhinavagupta*, pp. 607 and 623. Pandey notes that one makes the vital air enter the *suṣumṇā* and one contemplates on Śiva-Śakti unity; and that the practitioner checks the flow of vital air from all sides and makes it flow to the suṣumṇā's upper limit.
[21] *TĀ* 29.142b-147a:
srotodvayasya niṣṭhāntamūrdhvādhaścakrabodhanam//142//
viśrāmaṃ ca samāveśaṃ suṣiṇāṃ marutāṃ tathā/
gatabhedaṃ ca yantrāṇāṃ sandhīnāṃ marmaṇāmapi//143//
dvāsaptatipade dehe sahasrāre ca nityaśaḥ/
gatyāgatyantarā vitti saṅghaṭṭayati yacchivaḥ//144//
tatprayatnātsadā tiṣṭhetsaṅghaṭṭe bhairave pade/

> Śakti [is] the cavity (*kuṇḍa*), Śiva [is] the *liṅga*, [and] the fusion (*melaka*) is the Supreme Ground; from the two, there is emission and resorption. In the *Gamatantra*, [it is said that] the emission is threefold.[19]

(142b-147a)

AG continues citing the *Gamatantra* which now becomes quite detailed, describing various subtle body processes. AG's purpose here is to show that Kaula ritual also has a subtle body correlate.[20] The *Gamatantra* states that Śiva

unites the two consciousnesses, the two currents of breath, although they seem separate, within the body of 72,000 channels. This is what illuminates reality for both consciousnesses, allowing reality to be seen as without limitation.

> [Applying] awakening, repose, and penetration to the extreme points of the two currents, the upward and downward, and likewise to the wheel, the channels, the winds, the "parts that move," the yantras, the junctions, and finally the joints, [then] Śiva causes the fusion of the two consciousnesses, without the continual going and coming, in the body of the 72,000 spokes. From such continued exertion, one should always dwell in the union, the Bhairava ground. For both, that is the clear illuminating of reality, characterized by the attainment of existence without form, without measure and without division. One should practice "consciousness of existence," from turning away from all things, and stopping the sun and moon from the ways of dissolution and projection.[21]

(147b-149a: Immersion in the Threefold Reflexive Awareness)[22]

Here Abhinavagupta relates the above discussion to the vitality of *mantra*. AG states that at the time of immersion in the threefold reflexive awareness, identical to the threefold emission referred to above, the vitality of *mantra* rises toward the Unitive Dimension, thus taking the practitioner back to the Unitive Dimension. If one continually keeps their mind on the *mantra*

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[22] References to *mṛś* terms: Abhinavagupta, 29.147b: *vimarśa;* 148a: *parimarśa;* Jayaratha, p. 3392, l.19: *parāmarśa;* p. 3393, l. 14: *parāmarśa.*
[23]AG, *TĀ*, 29.147b-149a:
evaṃ trividhavimarśāveśasamāpattidhāmni ya udeti//147//

because they wish to immediately obtain fruit, they will know the rising of the *mantra*.

> Thus, what rises toward the abode of union at the time of immersion in the threefold reflexive awareness (*vimarśa*) [or emission (*visarga*)] whose self is the reflexive awareness (*parimarśa*) of consciousness, the resonating, that precisely here would be the vitality of *mantra*. If the one who wishes to obtain right there such emergent fruit continually unifies/connects his own *mantra* [to the abode of union], [then] he knows indeed the emerging of the *mantra*.[23]

The terminology used by AG and JR, in particular the terms "emission," "vitality," and "emergent" again suggest AG is semanticizing the sexual, fluid imagery of the early Kula/Kaula. As we have seen for example, the threefold emission refers to male sexual emissions, female sexual emissions, and the union of the two.[24] Along with those primary references it refers to the triadic schemes on various levels as I have pointed out above.

At the same time, AG is clearly appropriating Recognition philosophy. The term "unifying" or "connecting" (*anusaṃdhāya*) is directly linked to *anusaṃdhāna*, a term that makes up the heart of Recognition philosophy and that, according to Torella, is used in various ways. I recall here that Lawrence

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saṃvitparimarśātmā dhvanistadeveha mantravīryaṃ syāt/
tatraivoditatādṛśaphalalābhasamutsukaḥ svakaṃ mantram//148//
anusandhāya sadā cedāste mantrodayaṃ sa vai vetti/

[24] White, personal communication.

notes that this term is a cognate of the *mṛś* terms. Torella explains its various referents:

> Sometimes it means "unification, connection," often referring to the unifying function of thought which establishes relations between things (it is then glossed as *ekīkāraṇa*), pervading them with its own dynamism.[25]

Similarly, Dyczkowski translates *anusaṃdhāna* as "unifying awareness" or as "mental cognition." And according to Singh the term refers to the blending of sounds into a meaningful whole; or to the process by which one unites with and dissolves into *Anuttara*.[26] T

Most interesting is that this Recognition term was already linked to the vitality and emerging of *mantra* in the *Śivasūtras* (at 1.23):

> [The *yogī*] experiences the vitality of *Mantra* by contemplating the Great Lake.[27]

In his commentary, KR clearly links this practice back to the *yoginī*-related practices. He identifies the Great Lake with the Supreme Mistress of Consciousness who emits the totality out of herself. She is called the "Great Lake" because she is at the center of currents or streams of energy flowing out

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[25] Torella, IPK, p. 178, n. 11.
[26] Singh, *Trident of Wisdom*, pp. 70 and 100.
[27] ŚS 1.23: translated in Dyczkowski, *Aphorisms*, p. 59. In his commentary of this passage Bhāskara relates it to the emerging of *mantra* (*mantrodaya*): Dyczkowski, *Aphorisms*, p. 60.

of her, such as the activity of the sky-going (*khecarī*) wheels (i.e., the *yoginīs*).[28] KR then shifts into a discussion of the energy of consciousness, in the form of sound or *mantra*. KR writes:

> [The *yogī*] experiences the vitality of *Mantra* which is the reflective awareness of supreme I-ness (*parāhantavimarśa*) consisting . . . [of Śiva as] the Mass of Sounds (*śabdarāśi*), by contemplating [the Great Lake], that is, by constant introspection through which he reflects upon [his] identity with it and it[s] manifesting as his own nature.

The apparently sudden shift in language reveals only that in KR's mind this was no shift at all. He, like AG, understands consciousness in terms of fluids, in particular sexual fluids, as clearly indicated not only by his references to the Supreme Mistress and the sky-going wheels, but also by the fluid metaphors.

KR's exposition also helps us understand AG's passage regarding the notion of "connecting to" the *mantra*. Contemplating for AG is an act of connecting back to the source, the source in fact of all energy, which is described here as "mantric energy." All *mantras* are emitted and resorbed by this source in the form of energy.[29] The energy never loses its connection to the source; this energy is also described as vitality, the essence of consciousness that gives life to all beings. Further, its connection to the source may be used in order to return to that source. Thus, contemplating or

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[28] KR: translated in Dyczkowski, *Aphorisms*, p. 61; I assume that this is taken from the ŚSV.

connecting is simply gathering together all the energies that have been emitted, and seeing all these energies as related and unified, and in this way connecting them back to the source. This means seeing all energies, all objects as manifestations of one's very Self; in other words, one becomes the center of all energies. The fact that these energies are referred to as "sky-going wheels" means that KR is thinking of the early tantric context of attracting the *yoginīs* out of the sky and becoming the new center.

JR also makes it clear that Reflexive Awareness is an internalization of the Kula/Kaula practices. He freely mixes Recognition language while at the same clearly referring to sexual union, seen most clearly for example in his use of the term *saṃghaṭṭa*. JR states that for those immersed in the threefold immersion, some reflexive awareness vibrates; that vibrating reflexive awareness is the vitality of *mantra*. The emergent fruit is that which emerges at the moment of "banging together;"[30] the fruit is said to be impossible to describe because of its unitary abidingness with experience, abounding in bliss. One must unite with the *mantra*, immersing oneself into the primordial sound, which is the reflexive awareness of consciousness, the experience of

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[29] See Dyczkowski's exposition in *Aphorisms*, p. 61.

[30] This refers to the mingling of sexual fluids among other things.

wonder of the "I." Then one knows the emerging of the *mantra;* one appropriates the emergent *mantra.*

(149b-150a)

Still "continually unifying" one's own *mantra,* one should practice recitation:

> There precisely one should perform the recitation previously expounded, the variety of 100,000, with the help of sound; [such is] simultaneous with reaching the consciousness of unity of the secondary wheels.[31]

Eightfold Wheel, Eight Circles of *Yoginīs,* Eight Bhairavas, Etc.

In the next several verses, Abhinavagupta will refer to various entities or sets consisting of eight parts. This again links back to the Kaula practices. Padoux has noted that the number eight is a Kaula number, referring to the Eight Bhairavas and Eight Mothers of the Bhairava and *yoginī* cults.[32] Sanderson has noted that in the *yoginī* cults, a *yoginī* belonged to a clan (*kula*) of maternal powers. There were eight major families of mothers (*mātṛ*), with which *yoginīs* and adepts in the cult identified with and by which the two sets of practitioners were connected. In order to acquire their supernatural power,

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[31] *TĀ* 29.149b-150a
atraiva japaṃ kuryādanucakraikatvasaṃvidāgamena//149//
yugapallakṣavibhedaprapañcitaṃ nādavṛttyaiva/

[32] Padoux, *Vāc*, p. 162.

adepts would only worship *yoginīs* in their own clan.[33] Sanderson also notes that developing out of these cults, Kaulism introduced the notion of a Totality Body or Clan (*kula*). Still referring to a clan or body, the *kula* was cosmic in that it referred to the body of the whole universe and its powers and in particular to the powers of the eight mother families. One penetrated the Totality Body by accessing the particular mother family with which one was identified in a preliminary ritual where one entered a state of possession (*āveśa*).[34] Finally Sanderson notes that in the Kaula Yoginī cult the eight mothers became internalized so that the body became a temple in which to worship the deities. The mothers were linked to eight parts of the practitioner's subtle body, i.e., sound, sensation, visual form, taste, smell, will, judgment, and ego. The central deities worshipped became Lord and Lady of the Clan, identified with the practitioner's true self, a state of blissful consciousness. All the Mother-powers were seen as grounded in this new center, from which they were emitted and into which they were resorbed.[35] Thus the tantric pantheon became embodied. In a related permutation found in Krama, as described in AG's *Dehasthadevatācakrastotra*, in addition to the

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[33] Sanderson, "Śaivism and the Tantric Traditions," pp. 671-672.
[34] Sanderson, "Śaivism and the Tantric Traditions," p. 679.
[35] Sanderson, "Śaivism and the Tantric Traditions," p. 680.

connection between the eight mothers and Buddhi, Ahaṃkāra, Manas and the five sense organs, Gaṇapati, Vaṭuka, Ānandabhairava, Ānandabhairavī became Prāṇa, Apāna, Cit, and Vimarśa.[36]

I return now to AG's specific references to eightfold entities in this section of the *TĀ*. At verses 154b-156a, he refers to the experience of Reflexive Consciousness, equated with the vitality of *mantra*, arising through eight sonic phases. At verses 156b-158a, he refers to the eightfold wheel, the eightfold Bhairava-Position, and the eight aspects of that eightfold Bhairava-Position. And at verses 158b-160a, he refers to the eightfold Supreme Sound-Bhairava.

The eightfold entities being specifically mentioned by AG are apparently being identified with each other. Further, they are apparently being identified with other eightfold entities with which AG would have been familiar. The eightfold wheel appears to be an identification of the eight secondary circles of *yoginīs* with eight Bhairavas, as well as with the eight levels of subtle sounds heard by the practitioner as his breath-seed-energy-consciousness rises beyond the heart, the *ājñācakra* in *haṭhayogic* practice.

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[36] See *Dehasthatdevatācakrastotra*, pp. 3 ff.: Goudriaan, "Introduction, History, and Philosophy," p. 59. The *Dehasthatdevatācakrastotra* is translated by Flood, in *Body and Cosmology*, Appendix.

These also appear to be related to the eight locations within the subtle body, above the *ājñācakra*.[37]

(150b-153a)

AG now gives an elaborate description of the supreme *mudrā*, described as "dear to the *yoginī*." He appears to be demonstrating how the relationship between the primary wheel and the secondary wheels also has a subtle body correlate. We have a detailed description of such a correlate in Buddhist Tantra, described by Miranda Shaw:

> The *yogini*'s "secret place," in Tantric parlance, is sometimes referred to as Crowface. Crowface (*Kākāsyā*) is the name of a female deity, one of the eight door guardianesses of the Cakrasaṃvara *maṇḍala*. These eight goddesses share their names with eight main veins radiating from the vaginal nerve center, according to the Indian understanding of female anatomy that is reflected in the Tantric texts. The use of deity names for these veins conflates the vulva and the *maṇḍala* in the symbolic realm.[38]

AG is describing then a similar subtle-body correlate found in the *Yogasaṃcāratantra*. Behind or within the vulva-triangle is in fact a complex network of lotuses, petals, and so on:[39]

> And also in the *Yogasaṃcāratantra*, this is the supreme *mudrā*, dear to the *yoginī*; in the lotus concealing the *maṇḍala*, resting in the interior of

[37] White, personal communication.
[38] Miranda Shaw, *Passionate Enlightenment: Women in Tantric Buddhism*, (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1994), pp. 159-160: pointed out by White, personal communication.
[39] White, personal communication.

> the triangle, with its mouth eternally upraised. Always joined [to the lotus], a stem, with a root endowed with a lotus having sixteen petals; the stem standing in the middle, from the process of the touching of the two lotuses arranged [there]; [and] from the "banging together" of the streams of *kalās* of the moon and sun, full and beautiful, standing in the middle, in the fire; [and] from the union of the *kalās* of blood and semen in the lotus with three petals, there arises the sprout, the emission.[40]

(153b-154a)

Such a *mudrā*, which is the union of moon, sun, and fire, allows one to establish their processes of emission, maintenance, and resorption as a stable abode inside one's self and to reach the fourth state.

> Thus, by means of the *mudrā* of the touching of moon, sun, and fire, suddenly, one doing the processes of emission, and so on, inwardly, attains the fourth state.[41]

(154b-156a: Immersion in the Sky-Going Seal and the Eightfold Reflexive Awareness of the Supreme Sound)[42]

Abhinavagupta writes:

> At the time of immersion in this Sky-Going Seal (*khecara-mudrā*), when there is drinking, enjoying, playing, and laughing, etc., between one

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[40] *TĀ* 29.150b-153a:
śrīyogasañcare'pica mudreyaṃ yoginīpriyā paramā//150//
koṇatrayāntarāśritanityonmukhamaṇḍalacchade kamale/
satatāviyutaṃ nālaṃ ṣoḍaśadalakamalakalitasanmūlam//151//
madhyasthanālagumphitasarojayugaghaṭṭanakramādagnau/
madhyasthapūrṇasundaraśaśadharadinakarakalaughasaṅghaṭṭāt//152//
tridalāruṇavīryakalāsaṅgānmadhy'ṅkuraḥ sṛṣṭiḥ/

[41] *TĀ* 29.153b-154a:
iti śaśadharavāsarapaticitragusaṃghaṭṭamudrayā jhaṭiti//153//
sṛṣṭyādikramamantaḥ kurvaṃsturye sthitiṃ labhate/

[42] References to *mṛś* terms: Abhinavagupta, 29.155a: *vimarśa*; Jayaratha, p. 3398, l. 5: *vimarśa*; p. 3398, l. 6: *āmarśa*.

> and the other, among the Energy and the Energy-Possessor, [then] that which consists of Reflexive Consciousness (*vimarśa*) would arise; such would be the *mantra*-vitality (*mantravīrya*), [arising] by means of these forms: [1] the unmanifest, [2] the vibrating, [3] the roaring, [4] the opening of sound, [5] the eternal sound, [6] the resonating, [7] the end of resonating, and [8] the continually unstruck.[43]

These eight phases of sound are no doubt identified in the mind of AG with other eightfold sets. For example, following AG, JR identifies these eight phases of sound with the *ardhacandra, nirodhikā, nāda, nādānta, śakti, vyāpinī, samanā,* and *unmāna*, referred to at *TĀ* 6.161, where AG writes:[44]

> Sadāśiva, to the end of its limit of duration, journeys successively through the point, the half-moon, and the obstructing, and, finally, is resolved in sound (*nāda*), together with every thing, moving and not moving, included in Him.[45]

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[43] AG, *TĀ*, 29.154b-156a:
etatkhecaramudrāveśe'nyonyasya śaktisaktimatoḥ//154//
pānopabhogalīlāhāsādiṣu yo bhavedvimarśamayaḥ/
avyaktadhvanirāvasphoṭaśrutinādanādāntaiḥ//155//
avyucchinnānāhatarūpaistanmantravīryaṃ syāt/
JR identifies the eight phases of sound with the *ardhacandra, nirodhikā, nāda, nādānta, śakti,* vyāpinī, *samanā*, and *unmāna*, referred to by AG at *TĀ* 6.161: Gnoli, *LDSS*, p. 698.

[44] Gnoli, *LDSS*, p. 698.

[45] *TĀ* 6.161: my translation of Gnoli, *LDSS*, p. 227. Gnoli's footnote here reads: "The 'point' and, as we will see, the 'half-moon,' etc., are, one one hand, the ideal extension of the *praṇava* OṂ, and, on the other hand, as many degrees or mantric stations that the route towards the supreme consciousness traverses. The stations above the 'point' are the 'half-moon' (*ardhacandra*), the "obstructing" (*nirodhikā*), the "sound" (*nāda*), the "end of the sound" (*nādānta*), the "power" (*śakti*), the 'pervading' (*vyāpinī*), the 'equal' (*samanā*), and the 'trans-mental' (*unmanā*)."

The term *khecaramudrā* is also referred to as *khecarīmudrā*[46] and *bhairavīmudrā*.[47] JR's comments are revealing as he tells us that this is the sixfold *mudrā*. This refers to the six-angled *mudrā*, where the six angles are the angles of two interlocking triangles, one triangle being the *siddha*, and the other being the *yoginī*.[48] Further, *mudrā* itself means "(hermetic) seal," referring to the seal effected between the sexual organs of the two partners. This interpretation is supported by JR, who states that AG here is discussing the "mingled state" (*lolībhāva*).

JR also provides an important connection between the Sky-Going Seal and Reflexive Awareness. During immersion in this state, reflexive awareness arises. This is identified with the power of *mantra*, which is also identified with the force of the mingled state. The power of *mantra* is further described as reflexive awareness of supreme sound divided into eight types.

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[46] The term "khecarī" is a feminine of "khecara," as "bhairavī" is the feminine of "bhairava". (I think that Dyczkowski translates "bhairavī*mudrā*" simply as "*mudrā* of Bhairava;" that does not seem correct just from the Sanskrit.)

[47] AG, *TĀ* 32.4-6a (translated by Gnoli, p. 750). See also Silburn, *Kundalini*, pp. 209-213. On Bhairavī*mudrā* see V-Bh 77 and *TĀ* 13 (noted by Paul E. Muller-Ortega, "Aspects of Jīvanmukti in the Tantric Śaivism of Kashmir," in *Living Liberation in Hindu Thought*, ed. Andrew O. Fort and Patricia Y. Mumme (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1996), p. 216, n. 70). See also ŚSv 2.5 and Silburn, Mahārthamañjarī, p. 134 (noted by Muller-Ortega, *Triadic Heart* of Śiva, p. 265, n. 10). See also Muller-Ortega, *Triadic Heart*, pp. 37-38, 123, 142-6, 190. On pp. 37-8, he discusses khecarī*mudrā* as a practice of the Nātha *Siddhas*. On p. 123, he implicitly makes a connection between reflexive awareness and this *mudrā*. On both Bhairavī*mudrā* and Krama*mudrā*, see Dyczkowski, *Doctrine*, pp. 158-162.

[48] Padoux, *Vāc*, p. 267 (translating JR on 3.95-6).

The connections amongst the practices of *mantra* and *mudrā*, and *maṇḍala* also, have been clarified by Gavin Flood.[49] In general all are used to transform the body into a divine one. Through *mudrā*, as through *mantra* and *maṇḍala*, the tantric practitioner purifies and recreates his body, transforming his ordinary body into a divine body. This is the common bond of ritual in the Tantras; what varies are the names of the deities and the *mantras*. In all Tantras, the stages of ritual include the symbolic destruction and recreation of the body; internal worship or visualization; and external worship. These various rites collectively always involve the use of *mantras*, *mūdrās*, and *maṇḍalas*.

The importance of these three for AG is seen in the fact that he devotes *TĀ* 30, 31, and 32 to, respectively, *mantra*, *maṇḍala*, and *mudrā*. These are actually three of the four limbs of a Kula treatise, where the fourth limb is *vidyā*.[50] Does AG also treat *vidyā* in the *TĀ*? Rastogi answers this, drawing on JR's commentary on *TĀ* 29. He writes: "Four Āhnikas from 29th to 32nd constitute the four-seated Kula scripture consisting of Mantra, Mudrā, Vidyā and Maṇḍala. The 29th Āhnika pertains to Vidyā. . . . These four are the

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[49] This paragraph is a summary of Gavin Flood, *An Introduction to Hinduism*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996), p. 160.
[50] Rastogi, *Introduction*, pp. 234 and 238.

extension of the mode of worship (Upāsanāvidhi) according to Kulaprakriyā."[51]

So each of the four are referred to as *pīṭhas*; together they make up the four-seated Kula scripture (*catuṣpīṭhaśāstra*). Sanderson has discussed both Vidyāpīṭha and Mantrapīṭha and has shown that they refer to distinct tantric streams. It is interesting to note that AG uses the terms *vidyāpīṭha* and *mantrapīṭha* at *TĀ* 29.166b-169b. The implication is that he is partially commenting on how these two tantric streams blend together in his system. Further, it is possible that the terms *mudrāpīṭha* and *maṇḍalapīṭha* also refer to tantric streams.

Elsewhere, Gavin Flood explains further that for AG *mudrā* is a representation of supreme consciousness (and, again, the same is true for both *mantra* and *maṇḍala*). That supreme consciousness manifests in the body in the context of religious ritual, enabling one thereby to gain access to the higher level that the *mudrā* represents.[52] *Mudrā* too is able to contain vitality (*vīrya*); this is understood by AG as *śakti* expressing itself in that form. Interestingly, AG also equates the vitality of *mudrā* with *vimarśa*. Further, the *mudrā* becomes equated with *samādhi*, the immersion into higher levels of

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[51] Rastogi, *Introduction*, p. 638.

consciousness. *Samādhi,* in this context, literally "placing together," also refers to the complete integration of the partners' bodies. For AG then, the posture of sexual intercourse, in the context of the secret ritual, is the ultimate *mudrā,* reflecting the body of unity of Śiva and Śakti, or, in Flood's terms, the "body of Ultimate Consciousness." Flood further notes that both the power of the *mantra* and the power of the *mudrā* is given to the disciple by the guru, where the powers here are also understood as divinities. *Mudrā* and *maṇḍala* then are two aspects of supreme consciousness expressed in two different ways, one by means of the body, in particular, postures of the body, and one by means of sound. Both are also connected to the Heart.

(156b-158a)

The one who practices the *mantra* recitation, absorbed in their wheels, and immersed in the supreme seat, is able to obtain the plane of the eight Bhairavas or the eight wheels.

> Thus one having risen to the eightfold wheel, practicing natural *japa,* on the supreme abode, attains that which is the eightfold Bhairava plane, opened as eight aspects. [Present in] the going and the coming, in the one who dwells, in the ear, in the eye, in the touching of the two sexual organs, in the mingling union of those, at the death of the body, and in the wheel of union (*yāmalacakra*).[53]

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[52] This and the following is based on Flood, *Body and Cosmology,* pp. 242-3.
[53] *TĀ* 29.156b-158a:
iti cakrāṣṭakarūḍhaḥ sahajaṃ japamācaran pare dhāmni//156//

(158b-160a)

Who hears the unmanifest sound in the middle of the wheels becomes realized.[54]

> That which is manifest [goes] from the place of the heart, in the middle of the breasts, to the end of the lips, to the throat. Those hearing that in the middle of the two wheels, at the time of the cessation of agitation, are extinguished. Thus, there is the eightfold Bhairava, the supreme sound, made of light, primordial sounding, and agitation. He is called the "supreme mantric pervasion."[55]

(160b-161a)

Each aspect of the Supreme Bhairava is also a Bhairava, pervaded by the supreme pervasion.

> With-Digits (*sakala*), Without-Digits (*niṣkala*), Empty (*śūnya*), Abounding in Digits (*kālādhya*), Sky-Impurity (*khamala*), Destroyer (*kṣapaṇa*), Inward-Dweller (*kṣayātastha*), and Guttural-Labial (*kanṭhyoṣṭhya*); thus from the moon, this is the pervasion, ending in beyond-thought.[56]

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yadbhairavāṣṭakapadaṃ tallabhate'ṣṭakakalābhinnam/
gamanāgamane'vasitau karṇe nayane dviliṅgasaṃparke//157//
tatsaṃmelanayoge dehāntākhye ca yāmale cakre/

[54] Flood, *Body and Cosmology*, pp. 282-3 (at n. 28) on 158-160: even though there are parallels between the goal of aesthetics and that of the secret rite, the latter is much higher: union with Paramaśiva = Bhairava and Kālasaṃkarṣiṇī.

[55] *TĀ* 158b-160a:
kucamadhyahṛdayadeśādoṣṭhāntaṃ kaṇṭhagaṃ yadavyaktam//158//
taccakradvayamadhyagamākaṃya kṣobhavigamasamaye yat/
nirvānti tatra caivaṃ yo'ṣṭavidho nādabhairavaḥ paramaḥ//159//
jyotirdhvanisamirakṛtaḥ sā māntrī vyāptirucyate paramā/

[56] *TĀ* 29.160b-161a:
sakalākaleśaśūnyaṃ kalāḍhyakhamale tathā kṣapaṇakaṃ ca//160//
antaḥsthaṃ kaṇṭhyoṣṭhyaṃ candrādvyāptistathonmanānteyam/

(161b-162a)

One should meditate on this pervasion, and dwell in a continual state of union in any kind of activity. That one is liberated while still alive.

> Thus, from calling to mind the pervasion in every action at any place, by means of eternal mingling, [one is] liberated in life [and] becomes the Supreme Bhairava.[57]

(162b-3b)

Those who were conceived during this special union (such as AG) are known as "*yoginī*-born." Such fortunate ones are at once identical to Rudra, the receptacle of Consciousness. The *Vīrāvalītantra* states that one is already Śiva, even though still in the womb.[58]

> Whoever would have a body from the aspect of such union in the womb, that one is called "*yoginī*-arisen;" [such a person] is Rudra, spontaneously partaking of gnosis; in the *Vīrāvalī*[*tantra*] [it is said]: and though having only just arisen, still dwelling in the womb, [that one is] with the form of Śiva.[59]

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[57] *TĀ* 29.161b-162a:
evaṃ karmaṇi karmaṇi yata kvāpi smaran vyāptim//161//
satatamālepo jīvanmuktaḥ parabhairavibhavati/
(I am reading "mālepo" for "malepo.")

[58] Dyczkowski, *Stanzas*, p. 337, p. 48 also translates this; he prefaces his translation: "They along with their consorts, enter the fertilzed seed of a human being destined to become a teacher in that tradition and is believed to be born naturally endowed with the knowledge and other qualities required of one. Abhinava tells us indirectly that he was born of a similar union of two enlightened beings (elsewhere in the *TĀ*, as well as in the TS and PTV)." Pandey, *Abhinavagupta*, p. 607: that this is a way of conceiving a special human being is another way of distinguishing it from other rites.

[59] *TĀ* 29.162b-163b:
tāddṛṁmelakakalikākalitatanuḥ ko'pi yo bhavedgarbhe//162//

(164a-166a)

That sacrifice is called the "Primordial Sacrifice" (*ādiyāga*), because the essence is extracted/taken (*ādā*) from it, and because it is the Sacrifice that is the Principal (*ādi*) Sacrifice.[60]

> As the essence is extracted of that which is from the mouth and that this from the mouth is a sacrifice, so this is thought of as the primordial sacrifice. In various scriptures its natural form has been praised by the All-Penetrator: in the *Vīrāvalitantra, Hārdeśatantra* [*Hṛdayabhaṭṭārakatantra*], *Khamatatantra* [*Khecarīmatatantra*], *Siddhayogeśvarīmatam, Utphullakamatantra*, the *Nirmaryādatantra*, and the excellent *Caryākulatantra*, and so on.[61]

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uktaḥ sa *yoginī*bhuḥ svayameva jñānabhājanaṃ rudraḥ/
śrīvīrāvaliśāstre bālo'pi ca garbhagohi śivarūpaḥ//163//

[60] On extraction, see White, "Transformations," pp. 195 ff. and my conclusion. Pandey, in reference to this verse, at p. 619 (at notes 9 and 10) in *Abhinavagupta*, writes that the secret rite is called Primordial because it is "the means to the experience of Pure Consciousness" and because "it is primarily concerned with the principal circle." Pandey seems to be implicitly interpreting "extracting the essence" as "experiencing Pure Consciousness."

[61] *TĀ* 29.164a-166a
ādīyate yataḥ sāraṃ tasya mukhyasya caiṣa yat/
mukhyaśca yāgastenāyamādiyāga iti smṛtaḥ//164//
tatra tatra ca śāstre'sya svarūpaṃ stutavān vibhuḥ/
śrīvīrāvalihārdeśakhavatāṃavarvitaṣu//165//
śrīsiddhotphullamaryādāhīnacaryākulādiṣu/
Pandey refers to these verses and JR's commentary in *Abhinavagupta*, p. 619 (at nn. 9 and 10).

The Method of the Secret Teaching *(rahasyopaniṣad)*[62] (*TĀ* 29.166b-186a)

(166b-169b)

The term "grace" (*prasāda*) refers to the sexual fluids that have flown from the couple; the sharing of fluids has a clear correlate to the *pūjā* practice of offering food to the deity and receiving it back.[63] The guru blends together the sexual fluids, referred to as "moon" (female sexual emission) and "sun" (male sexual emission).[64]

> By means of the grace (*prasāda*) of this couple (*yugma*), free from vows and yoga, calling to mind at all times and solely intent on the primordial sacrifice, [the guru] would lay down on the body of Śakti the knowledge (*vidyā*) and on his own the *mantra* (*kuṭa*) respectively. Having meditated on the moon-like lotus, and on himself with the splendor of the sun, he then mingles together the two seats here precisely, consisting of the knowledge and the *mantra*.[65]

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[62] The term "rahasya" was applied to "forest books" (āraṇyakas) whose truths were too powerful and whose interpretations of the rituals were too symbolic for a village to bear: Malamoud, *Cooking the World*, p. 288-289, n. 66.

[63] Flood speculates, correctly it seems, on the term prasāda in *Body and Cosmology*, p. 298, though he was unable to find a specific reference. Doniger (O'Flaherty) refers to the term being used to refer to tantric ritual and the passing back and forth of sexual fluids in *Women, Androgynes, and Other Mythical Beasts*, pp. 270-271. See also my comments on prasāda in the next chapter.

[64] On one level, the two seats refer to the two tantric streams, on which I say more below. Also, see Flood, *Body and Cosmology*, p. 287 (at n. 46) for a comment on polarities in reference to "sun and moon" here.

[65] *TĀ* 29.166b-169b
yugmasyāsya prasādena vratayogavivarjitaḥ//166//
sarvadā smaraṇaṃ kṛtvā ādiyāgaikatatparaḥ/
śaktidehe nije nyasyedvidyāṃ kūṭamanukramāt//167//
dhyātvā candranibhaṃ padmamātmānaṃ bhāskaradyutim/
vidyāmantrātmakaṃ pīṭhadvayamatraiva melayet//168//

(170a-173b: Touching the Wheels of the Divinities with Bliss-Filled Essence)[66]

AG identifies the "body" to be the supreme wheel, i.e., the abode of worship where the wheels of divinities dwell. The phrase "wheels of divinities" refers to the senses arrayed around the primary wheel of the sexual organ so that on one level the "body" or "supreme wheel" refers to the actual physical body of the practitioner. On another level, the "wheels of divinities" refers to the *yoginīs* arrayed around the primary wheel of Śiva and Śakti in union, and thus the "supreme wheel" also refers to the totality of the *yoginīs*, i.e., as one body.[67]

As stated the "supreme wheel" refers to both the array of senses and the totality of *yoginīs*. On yet another level, the "body" or "supreme wheel" refers to the "primary wheel," which is often referred to as the "supreme *kula*" or "supreme body of consciousness." As Flood has pointed out, "body" in AG's system refers to both the body of manifestation and the body of consciousness. Interestingly, AG then identifies the supreme wheel with the supreme idol or phallic symbol (*liṅga*). The obvious question is: how could supreme wheel, when understood as the vulva, the mouth of the *yoginī*, the heart of the *yoginī*,

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[66] References to mṛś terms: Abhinavagupta, 29.173a: parāmarśa. No references by Jayaratha.
[67] David White, personal communication.

be referred to as a "*liṅga*"?[68] AG does in fact make a similar identification elsewhere in the *TĀ*, where AG is discussing the union of Śiva and Śakti and the Kaula secret ritual of union and where he is emphasizing the dynamic interrelationship between Śiva and Śakti and between the male practitioner and the *yoginī*.[69] There he maps out a complex "liṅgology" referring to no less than four levels on which the *liṅga* is present. The highest *liṅga*, understood as transcendent and as beyond all divisions inhering in the previous levels, is identified as the Heart of the *Yoginī*:

> The Heart of the *Yoginī* is this '*Liṅga*' beautiful with bliss. It generates an extraordinary bliss by the union of the [male] seed and the [female] womb (*yoni*). Free of exertion, all the deities [of the senses], their nature ever manifest (*nityodita*) consciousness, [repose] here in the abode full of bliss. The power of freedom (*durghaṭaśakti*) which expands and contracts of Lord Bhairava who neither expands nor contracts, manifests here and the entire universe, sprayed with the flux of the bliss of emission that arises by the union of these two *Liṅgas*, is perpetually renewed.[70]

Thus, the Supreme Wheel as the Supreme *Liṅga* is also the body which is consciousness itself, identified with the Heart of the *Yoginī*.

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[68] Mark Dyczkowski has shown that in the Kubjikā tradition the Goddess takes on the form of the liṅga: David White, personal communication. I have not seen his research yet.

[69] See *TĀ* 5.112b ff. and commentary: here I am following Dyczkowski's discussion in *Stanzas*, pp. 331-2, note 9. See also the discussion of *TĀ* 5.116b by Sanderson in "Doctrine of the MVT," pp. 295-296

[70] *TĀ* 5.121-124: translated in Dyczkowski, *Stanzas*, pp. 331-332, n. 9.

AG also makes a reference to a *maṇḍala* in these verses, with no specific details. In his commentary, JR fills in the details quoting AG himself from another part of the *TĀ* (*TĀ* 31.28); there AG writes: "Here in the threefold trident, with seven spokes, it [the *maṇḍala*] would consist of seven lotuses, wheels, or skies." This maṇḍala is also prescribed by *MVT* 9.6-31, cited by AG in *TĀ* 31.62-85b.[71] The same concatenation is already referred to in *KJN* 5.25-27.[72]

The most important part of these verses occurs after AG's reference to the *maṇḍala*, where AG states that the practitioner should touch the wheels of divinities, accompanied by, in particular, Reflexive Awareness, and with bliss-filled substances.

His use of a ter, based on the root *spṛś* to describe Reflexive Awareness (*parāmarśa*) reminds that Reflexive Awareness is rooted in the very visceral sense of touching. Furthermore, it is said the practitioner is to touch specifically the wheels of divinities. This is referring to the offering or smearing of food or sexual substances to the *yoginī*(*s*) or consorts in Kula/Kaula rites.[73] Regarding this, JR explicitly states that what arises from

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[71] Sanderson, "Maṇḍala," p. 171.
[72] David White, personal communication.
[73] David White, personal communication.

the primary wheel(s) (referring either to the act of sexual intercourse itself or to each of the sexual organs) are the male and female sexual substances, etc. (*mukhyacakrodgataiḥ kuṇḍagolakādibhiḥ*).

Thus, Reflexive Awareness, for AG, is nothing less than the orgasmic experience. At the time of orgasm, the secondary wheels are understood as rushing towards the center, which draws or sucks them in, i.e., "attracts" them.[74] The energies of these wheels had formerly been scattered, that is they had been primarily associated with external objects in the sense that individual consciousness had forgotten its identity to Supreme Consciousness. Now in orgasm all the energies are gathered together in one center, which itself spills out energy into the secondary wheels, now considered divinized in that they are reconnected to Supreme Consciousness. The experience of orgasm then is the experience of Reflexive Awareness, elsewhere described as pure Astonishment, as all things are continually rendered back to Śiva, continually reconnected to Śiva, and in fact now seen as identical to Śiva.[75]

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[74] In this paragraph, I am summarizing Silburn, *Kuṇḍalini*, p. 173.
[75] See also Flood, *Body and Cosmology*, pp. 288-289.
[76] References to mṛś terms: Abhinavagupta, 29.175b: āmarśa. No references by Jayaratha.
[77] David White, personal communication.
[78] Sanderson, "Meaning," pp. 89-90.

(174a-177b: Attaining the Supreme Abode and the Internal Satisfying)[76]

Here AG explicitly states that Reflexive Consciousness is the interiorization of the Kaula sacrifice. Just as one touches and satisfies the circles of *yoginīs*, in that way one performs the internal satisfaction with Reflexive Consciousness, the Primordial Touching. Abhinavagupta's prayer here, which follows his reference to the after-sacrifice, refers to the early tantric practice of offering the byproducts of sexual intercourse, i.e., the sexual fluids, to the deities.[77]

(178a-186a)

AG concludes by describing two variants of Kaula daily worship: the Vital Breath Sacrifice (*prāṇayāga*) and the Consciousness Sacrifice (*saṃvidyāgaḥ*).[78] They involve propitiating and satisfying the deities visualized within the vital breath or within consciousness itself. In the first the deities are satisfied with the nectar identified with the ingoing breath (*apānaḥ*), penetrating his body through the various "holes" in his head.[79] In the second, the higher form, the deities are visualized as the true nature of the self, i.e., unlimited and blissful consciousness. They are satisfied as the sage visualizes

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[79] Sanderson, "Meaning," p. 89.

all projections being resorbed back into Consciousness.[80] AG describes this process with cremation grounds imagery, identifying the body with a funeral pyre or the cremation grounds itself, where *yoginīs* and *siddhas* forever dwell.[81]

> Either: [1] one should visualize the entire multitude of divinities in the station of the vital breath; the guru should worship there precisely by means of the previously mentioned practice. The satiating of the goddesses dwelling in the vital breath [should be performed] through the lunar wheel of the ingoing breath (*apānaḥ*), entering through the "holes" [i.e., the orifices of the head], Brahmā, the nostrils, etc.[82] Thus by the process of the vital breath precisely one should satisfy the multitude of divinities [and] instantly by their grace, that one thereupon attains gnosis and the perfections.
>
> Or: [2] the wheel of the goddesses, dwelling as consciousness alone, are to be satisfied by the sage out of the offering to this consciousness, satisfying them with the totality [of all phenomena].[83]
>
> Where all attains dissolution, the piling of the principles are consumed by fire, you see the funeral pile, standing in the body, with the splendor of the fire of time. This desolate cremation ground, where *yoginīs* and *siddhas* dwell, their place of play, greatly wild, whose form is the

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[80] Sanderson, "Meaning," p. 90.

[81] AG uses similar cremation-grounds symbolism in *TĀ* 12 and in PS: discussed, along with a translation of *TĀ* 29.182a-186a, in Dyczkowski, *Doctrine*, pp. 143-4. Flood also provides a translation of the same verses along with a discussion of the significance of this imagery in *Body and Cosmology*, pp. 274-275.

[82] *TĀ* 29.178a-179b:
athavā prāṇavṛttistham samastaṃ devatāgaṇam/
paśyetpūrvoktayuktyaiva tatraivābhyarcayedguruḥ//178//
prāṇāśritānāṃ devīnāṃ brahmanāsādibhedibhiḥ/
karandhrairviśatāpānacāndracakreṇa tarpaṇam//179//

[83] *TĀ* 29.180a-181b:
evaṃ prāṇakrameṇaiva tarpayeddevatāgaṇam/
acirāttatprasādena jñānasiddhīrathāśnute//180//
saṃvinmātrasthitaṃ devīcakraṃ vā saṃvidarpaṇāt/
viśvābhogaprayogeṇa tarpaṇīyaṃ vipaścitā//181//

cessation of everything, surrounded by circles of their own rays, the intensity of darkness destroyed, free of all differentiated thinking, at the level of bliss only, full of innumerable funeral piles, who, having entered [such] cremation ground with the funeral piles of dreadful death, would not become perfected? Thus it has been said by Bhairavī in the *Virāvalītantra*.[84]

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[84] *TĀ* 29.182a-186a:
yatra sarve layaṃ yānti dahyante tattvasañcayāḥ/
tāṃ citiṃ paśya kāyasthāṃ kālānalasamaprabhām//182//
śūnyarūpe śmaśāne'smin *yoginisiddhasevite*/
krīḍāsthāne mahāraudre sarvāstamitavigrahe//183//
svaraśmimaṇḍalākīrṇe dhvaṃsitadhvāntasantatau/
sarvairvikalpairnirmukte ānandapadakevale//184//
asaṃkhyacitisampūrṇe śmaśāne citibhīṣaṇe/
samastadevatādhāre praviṣṭaḥko na siddhyati//185//
śrīmadvīrāvalīśāstre itthaṃ provāca bhairavī/

Chapter IV Appendix[1]

The Great Banquet of the *Siddha* and the *Yoginī*

The great banquet, the same as the *kramacaryā* practice of the Krama school--which corresponds to the *kulayāga* secret rite of the Kula school--the sacred experience of love,[2] allows [one] to go beyond oneself and acquire the consciousness of universal unity. The energy, [having] spontaneously reached a sudden intense outburst [of itself], while following the innate tendencies of human nature, rejoins the efficient vitality (*udyama*) with the way of Śiva, because in all energy one can find the intensity and purity of the vitality of the heart.

Only men and women initiated by a *yoginī* during *samādhi* or in a dream are invited to this great banquet. They should be masters of their senses, able to enter *nirvikalpasamādhi* at will and to have recognized the Self. This feast is only one of the aspects of the practice called *kramacaryā*: this one is only addressed to *siddhas* who seek to recover bliss and freedom while identifying with Bhairava, the Primordial Totality. Abhinavagupta specifies in the *Anuttarāṣṭikā*[3] that the mystical bliss experienced then is not like the intoxication of wine or riches, nor similar to union with one's beloved, any more than the light-consciousness resembles the rays of the sun or [the light of] the moon.

These rites being extremely secret, we can only guess the way in which they were enacted: men and women gathered together, seated in a circle, at a selected site, and surrounded themselves with beautiful objects: music, flowers, perfumes, incense, and sumptuous clothing. After having entered into samādhi, a *siddha* taking the cup of intoxicating liquor, passed it to his female neighbor, who in turn offered it to her male neighbor.[4]

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[1] This is my translation of Lilian Silburn's description of the Mahotsava, based on her reading of the *Mahārthamañjarī*: Lilian Silburn, *La* Mahārthamañjarī *de Maheśvarānanda*, Publications de l'Institut de Civilisation Indienne, fasc. 29; Études sur le Śivaïsme du Kaśmir, École Krama (Paris: Éditions E. de Boccard Indienne avec le concours du Centre National de la Recherche Scientifique, 1968), pp. 54-57. The rest of the footnotes are Silburn's unless otherwise indicated.

[2] These rites are also admitted by the Śākta, Yoginīmelāpa, and Vāmamarga schools, the Left-hand systems, of whose relations to the Krama system we are not aware. They are called *makhotsava*, *mahotsava*, *yoginī melana*, etc.

[3] *śloka* 4, in Pandey edition: K. C. Pandey, *Abhinavagupta*, Appendix C, p. 943.

[4] According to the Kashmirian tradition.

With the aim of extending the bliss of the Self [outward] into the whole universe,[5] they ate meat, drank intoxicating liquors, and united sexually, three actions prohibited ordinarily.

By the profusion of sensual pleasures, the organic energies and the breaths[6] fully satisfied, the physical vigor stimulated by the exciting [objects], the yogin enters into an emotive state, opposing his habitual calm: the heart overflowing, submerged by the flux of forces which have converged to form only one of an exceptional intensity, [having] had the sudden revelation of the vibrating Activity at the moment when this force--the simple shimmering of the true *spanda*--makes the heart vibrate.

When such a force invades the heart, this force becomes a superabundant energy of bliss *(ānandaśakti)* which is accompanied by a power that nothing impedes since the last traces of social and ethical restrictions have disappeared. Bewildered [wild with joy], stupefied [amazed], the *siddha* discovers the infinite field of energy, the freedom unheard of, of the "I" and its vitality.[7] Parallel to this vitality, its bliss rejoins its cosmic essence, from which there is the inexpressible amazement[8] as a result.

A similar amazement is accrued again at the time of religious ceremonies celebrated jointly, the *yoginīmelakas*; AG explains that for each participant the multitude of the rays of their own consciousness explodes and is reflected in the consciousness of all the other celebrants as in innumerable mirrors where they ignite, then his consciousness blooms forth. Abandoning without effort his state of individuality, the *vīra* is absorbed into the universal Consciousness full of bliss.[9]

The Krama school apparently distinguishes two levels of the *kramacaryā*, one with the intention of the *melāpasiddhas*, 'devoted to union,'

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[5] And to make one pass from *cidānanda* to *jagadānanda*, cosmic bliss. See *MM śloka* 58.

[6] Called *yoginī* and *siddha* respectively on the mystical plane and, on the ceremonial plane, corresponding to the partner and the yogin.

[7] *Mantravīrya*.

[8] *Camatkāra*.

[9] Saṃvitsarvātmikā dehabhedādyā saṃkucet tu sā/
melake 'nyonyasaṃghaṭṭapratibimbād vikasvarā//
TĀ 28.373-4. Excluded from the ceremony then are those who do not partake of this state of identity and whose presence is an obstacle to the blossoming of the universal consciousness.

and the other with that of the *siddhas* [who have] reached the perfect equality of spirit.

The first received initiation from an advanced master, during a ritual of union intended to make one enjoy the identity between Śiva and Śakti, Illuminated Consciousness and Free Energy. This ceremony was to correspond with the *kulayāga* described in great detail by AG in the *Tantrāloka*:[10] the yogin is united at first to Bhairava, drinks wine, and performs the *aṅganyāsa* by touching various parts of his own body, being identified with the energies that preside there. He recites the formulas, and offers oblations into the fire. Here takes place the rite of the union: the yogin and the partner, well-concentrated, are identified with Śiva and Śakti respectively and, after having offered homage to the *dūti*, the yogin is united with her.

This rite serves the *siddhas* in ensuring if under particularly difficult conditions that they can preserve the equality without agitation of the *nirvikalpasamādhi*, stripped of attachment, desire, shame, and doubts. That allows them, moreover, to acquire an exceptional power which makes them *vīras*,[11] bold and free men who, surmounting at the time prejudices and repugnances, go beyond in one moment their limitations.

At this point [there is] the true *kramacaryā*; it is reserved for the *siddha* of the second type, devoted to energy.[12] It is no longer a matter of a ritual, but of a general superhuman attitude or the constant practice of the heroic vow, *vīravrata*, which extending beyond the sexual life, is expressed in his slightest acts, beyond the restrictions that the religious Treatises impose and the distinctions of pure and impure; because he perceives all in the same light,[13] he confronts all in his infinite freedom; all being Śiva, all is pure, all is bliss.

This manner of being destroys the wavering, "this great pillar of the prisonhouse of transmigration;" doubt and fluctuation undermine indeed

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[10] *TĀ* 29.28-63.

[11] Cf. the commentary on *śloka* 38, p. 133.

[12] The *śāktasiddha*; no longer having any more attachemnt, he can be united with his own wife.

[13] *Samatā*.

the ardent desire and generate spiritual languor (*glāni*) and the folding-back on oneself (*saṃkoca*).[14]

Only the valiant warriors[15] take part in the great Banquet of Life, having fully recognized the Self in its universality/cosmic-ness, as they are the only ones capable of enjoying the cosmic bliss or pleasures of this world and the bliss of the Self that they find melted together.

These *siddhas* rejoin the *rājaputras*,[16] princes initiated into Kaula, masters of their virile power and great gurus who, because they possess a complete spiritual vitality, exert a beneficial influence on numerous disciples. . . .

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[14] *TĀ* 12.19-23. Doubt and wavering [*kampa*] are the greatest obstacles to the spiritual life.

[15] *Vīra*; similarly for Indra who, because he gets drunk from *soma*, becomes a hero (*vīra*).

[16] Cf. *śloka* 39 comm. p. 139. (My note: Sanderson, "Śaivism," p. 681 notes: The princes (*rājapūtras*) are the twelve sons of Macchanda, the revealer of the Kaula teachings and his consort, Koṅkana; six of the sons are non-celibate and able to serve as conduits for the flow of the Kaula teachings.)

Chapter V
Reflexive Awareness and the Fusion of All Scriptures
(*Vimarśa* in *Tantrāloka* 35)

This chapter discusses AG's use of *mṛś* terms in chapter 35 of the *TĀ*, entitled "The Fusion of All Scriptures," (*samastaśāstramelana*) (*TĀ* 35.1-44b; pp. 3645-3670), focusing on the notion of Reflexive Awareness (*vimarśa*).

Background

Here I discuss the notion of Fusion (*melana*); the notion of Revealed Tradition (*āgama*); the equation of Revealed Tradition (*āgama*) and Reflexive Awareness (*vimarśa*); and the notion of Intuitive Certainty (or a priori certainty) (*prasiddhi*).

In my discussion of the notion of Revealed Tradition (*āgama*), I also discuss the notion of validity (*prāmāṇyam*), and I relate AG's etymology of *āgama* to the significance of meaning and consciousness in AG's thought.

In my discussion of AG's equation of *āgama* and *vimarśa*, in his philosophical commentaries, I review the notion of "Āgamic identity," as elucidated by Alexis Sanderson. Sanderson's theories lead to a discussion of the Trika revelation as a complex system. I suggest that there are images in the Hindu traditions that naturally evoke complex systems; and I then suggest that Revelation as a complex system allows AG to do his hermeneutics. Finally, I note that this is nothing new, as the Vedas taken as a whole have

acted as a complex system, allowing Vedic interpreters to practice their art of creative hermeneutics.

The Fusion of All Scriptures

The Term *Melana*

The key term in the title of chapter 35, "The Fusion of All Scriptures" (*sarva-śāstra-melana*) is *melana*.[1]

The term is derived from the root *mil*, ("to meet, assemble"); the Latin *mille* ("assemblage, host, thousand") is a cognate, from which is derived the English "mile" ("a thousand (paces)"); it is perhaps related to the term *mil-it-es* ("going in companies or troops").[2]

The French and English "mélange" ("mixing") appears also to be related, as do, possibly, the English "meld" and "melt."

In addition to the translation "fusion" (Sanderson, and Torella), other good translations for this term include "meeting/assembly/encountering" (Gnoli), "mixing, mingling" (White), "union/unity" (Halbfass), and "nonduality/nonotherness" (Torella).

A term that dwells in the same semantic field is found in a Vedic hymn of praise to Soma, extolling the wonders of the ecstasy of Soma: "The juices of

[1] Abhinavagupta also uses the related term *milita* at *TĀ* 37.2a-2b, apparently referring back to *TĀ* 35:
aśeṣatantrasāraṃ tu nāmadakṣiṇamāśritam/
ekatra militaṃ kaulaṃ śrīṣaḍardhaśāsane//
This was first noted by Rastogi, in *Introduction*, p. 250, note 1.

[2] Lanman, *Sanskrit Reader*, s.v.

him so full of juice mingle together. . . ."[3] Another possibly related term, used in a negative sense by the orthodoxy, is *saṃkāra*; this means "intermingling," and refers to a member of the higher caste intermingling with a member of the lower.[4] A possible implication is that AG's use of the word *melana* goes hand-in-hand with his awareness that he was challenging orthodox structures.[5]

Prior to Abhinavagupta, the term is used in both Recognition philosophy and in a tantric context. In Recognition philosophy, Utpaladeva uses the term *melanā* at *IPKV* IV.1 (translated by Torella as "fusion");[6] AG, commenting on this, uses the term *melana* (translated by Torella as "ultimate non-otherness"):

> [Utpaladeva is referring to] the reflective awareness of the perceiving subject as not distinct from the other subjects, i.e. of the fundamental unity of the subject beneath the apparent fragmentation; the same applies to the object; and finally the awareness of the ultimate non-otherness (*melana*) of subject and object.[7]

And Alper notes that in the context of Recognition philosophy the term *pra-ud-mīl* ("to open the eyes, to open as a flower, to blossom, to come to light, to

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[3] *RV* 9.113: translated in Doniger (O'Flaherty), *Rig Veda*, pp. 132-134. I do not have the Sanskrit presently; but this is worthy of investigation.

[4] Wilhelm Halbfass, *Tradition and Reflection: Explorations in Indian Thought* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1991), p. 355.

[5] It would be interesting to find a *mīl* term with a similarly negative connotation.

[6] Torella, IPK, p. 210.

[7] Torella, IPK, p. 210, n. 2.

unfold, to reveal")[8] is often used as a cosmogonic term, expressing the dynamism of the Śaivite process worldview.[9]

In the tantric milieu, the term *melana* is also a relative of *melaka* or *melapā*, both referring to the fusion of the yogi and his erotic counterpart, the *yoginī*.[10] Such meaning is at once retained and gone beyond by AG in his use of the term in *TĀ* 28 and 29.[11] In *TĀ* 28 for example AG refers to both a fusion of bodies and a fusion of consciousnesses:

> The plenary Consciousness which had become contracted owing to differentiation in bodies, etc., can expand again during these gatherings where all the participants reflect one another (in harmonious union). The flow of their activated organs is reflected in the consciousness of each participant as if in so many mirrors; and the organs, all aflame, attain without effort to universal unfoldment. This is why, at those great gatherings, songs, dances, etc. are fully enjoyed by all who attend when, being one and not distinct, they identify with the spectacle; even at the individual level, their consciousness overflowing in joy reaches oneness when beholding the dances . . . and delights in universal bliss.[12]

Finally, echoing AG are JR in his commentary[13] and Maheśvarānanda in his *Blossoming of the Great Meaning*.[14]

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[8] Monier-Williams, *Sanskrit-English Dictionary*, s.v.

[9] Alper, "Ubiquity," pp. 359-360, note 25. Alper also refers to these terms: *ud-śal*, *ud-las*, and *pra-sphṛ*. Other terms would seem to dwell in this same semantic field that Alper has in mind, for example, *vilolatā* ("effervescence") (translated by Torella, IPK, p. XXV, n. 34), and also *spanda*, *sphoṭa*, *sphuṭa*, and *kampa* (on these see Isayeva, *From Early Advaita to Kashmir Shaivism*, pp. 133-134, p. 138, note 8, and pp. 181-182).

[10] Sanderson, "Śaivism and the Tantric Traditions," p. 680.

[11] See Silburn, *Kuṇḍalinī*, pp. 165 and 195. For another reference to a *mil* term see *TĀ* 1.252-5: in Gnoli, *LDSS*, p. 102.

[12] *TĀ* 28.371: translated in Silburn, *Kuṇḍalinī*, pp. 165-166. See also Gnoli, *LDSS*, pp. 671-673.

[13] See Silburn, *Kuṇḍalinī*, p. 195.

A possible implication of AG's use of the term *melana* is that it partially signals AG's view of language, consciousness, and reality as primarily "erotic."

The Validity of all Revealed Traditions

A central theme in *TĀ* 35 is referred to by the phrase the "Validity (or Legitimacy or Authenticity) of All Revealed Traditions" (*sarva-āgama-prāmāṇyaṃ*).[15] Jayaratha uses this phrase in reference to this chapter in his commentary on the first verse;[16] and Halbfass notes that the same phrase was used earlier by the Naiyāyika Jayanta Bhaṭṭa (9th century) in his *Blossoming of Logic* (*Nyāyamañjarī*), while articulating the view that all traditions are the creation of one Lord who appears in different forms to teach humans of different capacities. Halbfass states that the themes articulated most memorably by Abhinavagupta are related to the earlier expressions of Jayanta in both the above-mentioned text and his *Āgamaḍambara*.[17] (Sanderson translates the title of the latter text as "Much Ado about Scripture.")

I now turn to a discussion of the two key terms in this phrase, *prāmāṇyaṃ* and *āgama*.

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[14] For example, see Silburn, *Kuṇḍalinī*, p. 211.

[15] I am using Torella's translation of *āgama* as "Revealed Tradition;" such captures the idea that Āgama is at once both tradition and revelation.

[16] First noted by Halbfass; see note below.

[17] Halbfass, *India and Europe*, pp. 360 and 562, n. 46.

The Notion of Validity (*prāmāṇyam*)

For AG it is Revealed Tradition that brings one back to the source, that illuminates; another way of saying this is that it is the ultimate source of knowledge (*pramāṇa*). This is consistent with AG's etymology: "what illuminates the object fully in all its parts" (I will say more about this below).

In general, Abhinavagupta accepts three means of knowledge (*pramāṇas*): direct perception (*pratyakṣa*), inference (*anumāṇa*), and word (*śabda*).[18] However, the first two ultimately depend on the third, understood as Revealed Tradition, or as the very Consciousness of Śiva, on which everything in fact ultimately depends.

This Consciousness manifests in the form of written scriptures, and as the consciousness and discourse of the guru, seen as identical to Śiva.[19]

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[18] Douglas Renfrew Brooks, "The Canons of Siddha Yoga: The Body of Scripture and the Form of the Guru," in *Meditation Revolution: A History and Theology of the Siddha Yoga Lineage*, by Douglas Brooks, et. al. (South Fallsburg, N.Y.: Agama Press, 1997), p. 319 and p. 625, note 68. See also Lawrence, *Argument and Recognition*, pp. 159-160, note 1. For a general discussion of the *pramāṇas*, see Karl H. Potter, *Presuppositions of India's Philosophies* (Englewood Cliffs, N.J.: Prentice Hall, 1963), pp. 56-92. Potter discusses *śabda* on pp. 84-86. According to Potter, *śabda* is often replaced in Indian Philosophy by the terms *āgama* and *śruti* ("what is heard from sacred authorities"). Also note Potter's references for futher details to Satischandra Chatterjee, *The Nyaya Theory of Knowledge: A Critical Study of Some Problems of Logic and Metaphysics*, 2nd ed. (Calcutta: University of Calcutta, 1950; reprint, 1965); F. Th. Stcherbatsky, *Buddhist Logic*, 2 vols. (New York: Dover Publications, 1962); and Sitansusekhar Bagchi, *Inductive Reasoning: A Study of Tarka and Its Role in Indian Logic* (Calcutta: M. Sinha, 1955).

[19] Brooks, "Canons," p. 625, n. 68.

The Term Āgama: Revealed Tradition, Consciousness, and Meaning

Meanings for the term "āgama" include "coming near," "arrival," "appearance," "course (of fluid)," "issue (of blood)," traditional doctrine," and "anything handed down and fixed by tradition."[1]

The term found itself in the stream of creative uses and etymologies, partially reflecting its significance in general.[2] In one definition, it means *pāśa-paśu-pati;* and some advanced practitioners call themselves simply *āgamantin*.[3]

AG himself describes it as "what transmits meaning fully in all its parts."[4] Such an etymology points toward one of the primary meanings of the term for AG, namely, "tradition." More specifically, this tradition for AG is one always revealed by God; thus it is at once both Tradition and Revelation. In the totality of meanings then, this Revealed Tradition is that which "comes near," i.e., comes into the presence of the individual's consciousness. Revealed in the primordial past, Tradition and the past manifest in the present, continually "arriving," "appearing," being made present.

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[1] Monier-Williams, *Sanskrit-English Dictionary*, s.v.

[2] Gnoli, *LDSS*, p. 12, n. 4. Gnoli refers to J. Filliozat regarding one etymology; and also refers to AG's own etymology.

[3] Both of these examples are noted by Jan Gonda, *Medieval Religious Literature in Sanskrit*, in *History of Indian Literature*, ed. Jan Gonda, vol. 2, fasc. 1. (Wiesbaden: Otto Harrassowitz, 1977), p. 163, n. 1. He also refers to AG's etymology (discussed below).

[4] See below for details.

Overview of AG's Understanding of Revealed Tradition in *TĀ* 35[5]

With that as background I now present a brief overview of AG's treatment of Revealed Tradition in chapter 35. Abhinavagupta begins by stating that Revealed Tradition, in the form of Intuitive Certainty (or *a priori* certainty), unifies all ways of behaving.[6]

Further it is Intuitive Certainty that leads one to depend on the Śaiva Revealed Tradition; anyone with the right heart naturally listens to their Intuitive Certainty, and this leads them to the Śaiva Revealed Tradition.[7]

In fact there is only one Revealed Tradition, the Trika Revealed Tradition, continually revealed by Śiva in different forms, to serve human beings of different spiritual capacities, just as the one Intuitive Certainty manifests in different forms. And although there is only the one path of Śambhu, the Revealed Tradition manifests as different paths. These different paths range from those of asceticism to those of enjoyment, and lead to different fruits, some more complete than others.[8]

It is not that there are two paths and one goal; rather each path has different goals.[9] All the other traditions, from the non-sacred treatises through Vaiṣṇavite, Buddhist, and Śaivite, are grounded in this one tradition.[10] If this ground is forgotten then the limited tradition becomes a

[5] References to *āgama* in *TĀ* 35 by Abhinavagupta: verses 2a, 16b, 23a, 24b, 30a, 35a, 37a, 37b, 38a, 41a, and 41b.
[6] *TĀ* 35.1a-3a.
[7] *TĀ* 35.16a-17b.
[8] *TĀ* 35.23a-23b, 24a-24b, 30a-30b, and 35a-35b.
[9] *TĀ* 35.30a-34b, and 38a-40a.
[10] *TĀ* 35.30a-30b.

distortion. If the particular limited tradition is viewed as complete in itself, when in fact it has been separated from its unitive source, then it only confuses.[11]

Images of Streams and Flowing

In the *MVV*, AG refers to the variety of streams of Revealed Tradition *(āgamastrotāṃsi)*.[12] For AG one great stream overflows into a variety of streams, together undivided, in perfect continuity with one another. Revealed Tradition then is the great stream continually flowing into the present. It is a living lineage of masters and scriptures in touch with one another and in touch with the primordial past; this continual flux remains then in touch with God, serving as a frictionless waterway, allowing Consciousness to flow through.

The notion of a flowing stream (and of flowing in general) and its association with Revelation and Word, as well as with poetic inspiration and openness to the Word, goes back to the Vedic Tradition. A few examples are described by Gonda:

> Like streams (probably, of ghee) the words of religious inspiration flow, in the interior, together clarified by heart and 'mind' (*manas*).[13]

Noting the connection between ghee and soma and sacred word, he writes:

> . . . the ghee of the liturgical word, which the gods produce from the seer . . . , flows from the ocean in his heart.[14]

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[11] *TĀ* 35.37a-37b.

[12] *MVV* 1.15-435: first referred to by Sanderson, "Maṇḍala," p. 172, n. 8.

[13] Jan Gonda, *Vedic Literature*, in *History of Indian Literature*, vol. 1, fasc. 1. (Wiesbaden: Otto Harrassowitz, 1975), p. 68.

He also writes:

> This process of transformation was assumed to be parallel or identical with that which on the sacrificial ground took place in connection with the soma juice and so was Soma regarded as a clarifier of poetic thought: "In the strainer which discharges a thousand streams the inspired poets clarify their words."[15]

Finally we are reminded that it is the River Goddess Sarasvatī, the Stream Goddess, or "she who flows,"[16] who becomes identified with Vāc, Goddess of the Word and bestower of visions.[17]

Return and Retrieval

It is also interesting to note that AG's interpretation of tradition is remarkably resonant with other understandings of tradition and of religion (one of the "guardians." For example, the hero in "Amistad" describes tradition as follows:

> [I reach back into the past and draw all the ancestors into me; the ancestors must come . . . as in the present moment of time, I am the only reason they exist.][18]

In addition, here is David Michael Levin's characterization of religion:

> [Religion is] a regressive return to retrieve a dimension of experience. . . . [It is] a movement which is not (so to speak)

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[14] Gonda, *Vedic Literature*, pp. 68-69.

[15] Gonda, *Vedic Literature*, p. 69.

[16] Georg Feuerstein, *Tantra: The Path of Ecstasy* (Boston: Shambhala Publications, 1998), p. 186.

[17] Gonda, *Vedic Literature*, p. 67.

[18] My reconstruction, based on memory.

> 'completed' until the 'oceanic' experience, the wisdom of interconnectedness and wholeness, has been brought back, brought into the present, and appropriately integrated into present living.[19]

Finally, we are reminded that the Ṛṣis, the Vedic Seers, are those who have the capacity to bring the past into the present.[20]

AG's creative etymology appears at *IPV* II 3.2: *ā samantād arthaṃ gamayatīti āgama* (literally, "what illuminates the object fully in all its parts").[21] Given AG's emphasis on consciousness-meaning, an alternative translation is: "what transmits meaning fully in all its parts." Such is consistent with Abhinavagupta's hermeneutical endeavor, propelled by the unstated assumption, "Whoever gets the most meaning, wins." And in the light of the above discussion, this is a transformation of the Vedic-cum-Tantric unstated assumption, "Whoever gets the essence (or juice), wins." I will say more about the connection between sacrifice and meaning in my conclusion.

Revealed Tradition then is that which transmits or conveys meaning; it is in fact the very process of transmission. This resonates with AG's

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[19] Levin, *Opening of Vision*, p. 218.
[20] Gonda, *Vedic Literature*, p. 65.
[21] *IPV* II 3.2, Vol. II, p. 87, ll. 5-6. Translated by Kanti Chandra Pandey, *Īśvarapratyabhijñāvimarśinī, Bhāskarī*, vol. 3 (Lucknow: Princess of Wales Saraswati Bhavana Texts, 1954.), p. 146: "it makes the object known in every way." See also Gnoli, *LDSS*, p.

understanding of Consciousness, the ultimate conveyer of meaning; and thus sheds light on AG's equation of Revealed Tradition and Consciousness, or Reflexive Awareness.

I recall here how AG understands Consciousness, as this is a clue to how he understands Revealed Tradition. In various ways AG presents a vision of Consciousness as both alive and enlivening. Consciousness's aspect of Reflexive Awareness, for example, is what distinguishes it from anything inert. Or similarly, Reflexive Awareness is the very Vitality (or Potency) (*vīrya*) of the mantra or of the guru. In other words, making contact with or touching the mantra or the guru is sufficient to give the practitioner's consciousness a "charge," or to vitalize it or enliven it. This notion is consistent with other meanings that AG wants to retain in his understanding of Consciousness. In other words, as we have seen, in some contexts *vīrya* refers specifically to sperm or other fluids; and the meanings on the "sexual" level become transferred to the meanings on other levels. More specifically, even in AG's hermeneutics of consciousness, when AG wants to discuss Consciousness, and he "spins" his interpretation of Vitality in the direction of Consciousness or Reflexive Awareness, this

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12, n. 4 and Gonda, *Medieval Religious Literature in Sanskrit*, p. 163, n. 1. I have taken the Sanskrit from Gnoli, *LDSS*.

Consciousness is still something that "flows" from the guru to the disciple; and this Consciousness becomes Revealed Tradition itself, which similarly flows, transmits, and transfuses itself.

As AG states in this chapter, children become capable of acquiring knowledge (and thus capable of becoming part of the Revealed Tradition) precisely because of possessing this Reflexive Awareness (what he refers to as Intuitive Certainty (I will discuss this further below)). All human beings distinguish themselves from rocks and blank slates in possessing that which can in fact be "charged," be enlivened. This is Vitality then, the primordial intuitive consciousness serving as a link to other consciousnesses. One thinks here of the experience, not too unusual, of discourse and consciousness being raised to a higher level, in the company of someone (a saint or creative genius of some sort perhaps); this only happens AG would say when one is "open," i.e., when one possesses Intuitive Certainty or Reflexive Awareness (I will discuss the notion of "openness" further below).

AG's linking of Revealed Tradition with vital Consciousness resonates with certain Vedic theories on the "physics" of mantra:

> [M]antras are thought to be so highly charged that unless properly handled by a priest or by a person under the close supervision of a

> priest, the mantra can fall back upon and burn its speaker. The Vedic mantra is like a high voltage channel that puts its speaker in direct connection with the power-source of the universe.[22]

For AG, Revealed Tradition is similarly "charged," and, hence, is able to charge; it is a link back to the source, the live wire to God.

Reflexive Awareness as Wormhole to God

The above discussion then uncovers yet another aspect of Reflexive Awareness. One way of interpreting the notion of Reflexive Awareness would be as a "wormhole to God."

By wormhole I have in mind the idea of some physicists (and my only intention here is to use this idea strictly as a metaphor) that there are holes scattered throughout the universe that have the peculiar quality of transporting one to another dimension in time. These holes allow one to time-travel instantly; another way of saying this is that these holes bring the past into the present. The result is the same either way, whether the person flows to the past, or the past flows to the present; what is important are the connecting, flowing, and transmitting aspects: one connects, instantaneously flows, is transmitted to another level or dimension of reality, simply by touching, making contact with, putting one's body into

[22] Harold Coward and David Goa, *Mantra: Hearing the Divine in India* (New York:

one of these holes.

The instantaneous aspect is relevant because of the association AG makes with Reflexive Awareness in other contexts. Reflexive Awareness, the Wormhole to God, is nothing less than a Flash of Insight (*pratibhā*); one is instantly struck, and in that very moment, one is transported, "whooshed" away, toward God. A striking visual display of a hero being transmitted to other dimensions upon reaching or touching these holes may me viewed in the recent film "Contact."[23]

If I am right in suggesting that Reflexive Awareness for Abhinavagupta is a "wormhole to God" then AG's interpretation of *vimarśa* links back to another notion, that of *āmarśana* in the context of Vedic ritual. Malamoud describes this:

> In the *uparavāmarśana*, another ritual act symbolizing alliance . . . and one of the innumerable preparatory rites to the *agniṣṭoma*, the *adhvaryu* priest and the sacrificer plunge their right arms into the 'resonating holes' dug into the ground, on the sacrificial site, such that their right hands touch each other through a transversal tunnel between the two holes. During this touching (*āmarśana*), they have the following conversation (speaking through their conduits): ' "Sacrificer", says the *adhvaryu*, what is there here?" "Happiness (*bhadram*)" replies the sacrificer. "May it be common to both of us", the *adhvaryu* says in a low voice'.[24]

Columbia University Press, 1996), p. 12.

[23] See also "Wormholes in the Cosmos," 24 Nov. 2000. <www.intothecosmos.com>.

[24] Malamoud, *Cooking the World*, p. 320, n. 7.

The *adhvaryu* and the sacrificer, by making a connection to one another through the resonating hole, ally themselves with each other, that is, they unite, connect, resonate with each other (this whole process is quite "erotic" and I will have more to say about the erotic aspect of AG's worldview itself in my conclusion). Not uncommon is the ability of a ritual act to have a powerful transformative effect. Here then we see the ritual act of touching effecting an actual alliance, a new ontological state of being that is bodily felt by the participants.

It appears that one of the many things that AG is doing is continuing this notion of resonating, which for AG becomes a kind of "zapping," or, again, a kind of "charging." For AG, the consciousness of the disciple resonates with the consciousness of the guru, which resonates with the consciousness of Śiva. In this way the disciple is linked back to the primordial past, becoming part of the flow of Revealed Tradition. Thus, whether in the Vedic ritual or in the ritual of meeting face-to-face with the Śaivite guru and hearing his words, understood as Revealed Tradition, we have two poles that come to resonate on the same "wavelength," joining each other in interplay, and thus discovering-imagining a new level of reality; the connection, the union is effected by touch, whether by physical touch *(āmarśana)*, or the touching of consciousness and the getting back in touch with God (*vimarśa*) (which of course, as we have seen, is experienced most directly in the physical touching ritual of sexual union (*kulayāga*)).

The Equation of Revealed Tradition and Reflexive Awareness

Equation of *Āgama* and *Vimarśa* in *IPV* and *IPVV*

AG's Divergence from Utpaladeva

In the *IPV* and the *IPVV*, AG equates *āgama* and *vimarśa*. In the *IPV*, AG states that Revealed Tradition is the Highest Reality, identical to God's Reflexive Awareness:

> Revealed Tradition is the Highest Reality, the Reflexive Awareness of the Great Lord whose Self is the Light that is unlimited (and completely connected to Itself, to everything, everywhere) (*aparichinna*).[25]

In the *IPVV*, AG tells us that Revealed Tradition is the transmission of authentic experience:

> *Āgama* consists of verbal communication. The blessed Ananta said that (religious) teaching is given through the medium of speech, which communicates the teacher's personally experienced truth.[26]

Also in the *IPVV*, AG discusses Revealed Tradition as an unbroken stream going back to God, the primordial teacher; further, all Reflexive Awareness rests in God and takes us back to God:

> This idea of truth is revealed to a particular person and thus becomes communicated to the public through him and thus is labeled with his name. But actually the truth has nothing to do with a specific person, in the sense of his having discovered something new. There

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[25] *IPV*, p. 213, l. 3 (III 1.1):
āgamastvaparicchinnaprakāśātmakamāheśvaravimarśaparamārthaḥ kiṃ na paśyet, iti tadanusāreṇa padārthanirṇayaṃ viśvaprameyikaraṇapratilabdhatadviśvettīrvarṇapramātṛpadahṛdayaṅgamikārābhiprāyeṇa nirūpayitumācārya āgamādhikāraṃ tṛtīyamārabhate/
[26] *IPVV* 3: translated in Dvivedi, "The Utility of Tantrism," p. 36.

> is no one fixed person called the Buddha. When the idea of the momentariness of all phenomena dawned in the mind of somebody through long practice of meditative concentration on the meaning of the truth, he was called the Buddha. But he himself must have received this idea from his teacher, a previous Buddha. And the line must thus go back to God Himself as the primal teacher, because all reflection (*vimarśa*) rests in God. Similarly, Kapila was only the recipient of the revelation of the twenty-four categories. Therefore all textual religious traditions are eternal.[1]

Is AG merely continuing the thought of Utpaladeva in identifying Revealed Tradition with Reflexive Awareness? Abhinavagupta, in his philosophical commentaries, the IPV and IPVV, often does follow Utpaladeva (as Torella has noted); yet this interpretation appears to be his own innovation. Although references to vimarśa and related terms (*avamarśa, avamṛśyatā, āmarśa, ā-mṛś, parāmarśa, parā-mṛś, pratyavamarśa, pratyava-mṛś, pratyavamṛśya, vimarśana, vi-mṛś, vimṛśattva*; and even *avimarśana*)[2] are found throughout Utpaladeva's *IPK*, none of these are found in the section on the topic of Revealed Tradition (section III).[3] Thus AG's equation of Revealed Tradition and Reflexive Awareness goes beyond 's own thinking, as he continues a hermeneutical process passed on to him through his Trika guru Śambhunātha, to whom he attributes the teachings in this chapter.

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[1] *IPVV* 3, pp. 89-104: translated in Dvivedi, "The Utility of Tantrism," pp. 36-37.

[2] See Torella's "Index of Important Words in the Text" in his IPK, pp. 235 ff.

[3] References in *IPV*, section III to vimarśa and related terms are in fact numerous, again indicative of the importance of the term for Abhinavagutpa: p. 210, l. 3: *vimarśini*; p. 213, l. 3: *vimarśa*; p. 215, l. 5: *vimarśa* (two occurrences); p. 223, l. 1: *vimarśa*; p. 223, l. 3: *vimarśa*; p. 223, l. 5: *vimarśa*; p. 224, l. 7: *vimarśa*; p. 225, l. 6: *parāmarśa*, and *parāmṛśyamāna*; p. 226, l. 1: *vimarśa*; p. 237, l. 4: *parāmṛś-*; p. 242, 12: *vimarś-*; p. 243, l. 3: *vimarśini*; p. 257, l. 7: *parāmarśa*; p. 257, l. 8: *parāmṛṣṭa*; p. 261, l. 5: *parāmarśa*; p. 261, l. 6: *parāmarśa*; p. 262, l. 1: *parāmarśa*; p. 266, l. 12: *parāmarśana*; p. 272, l. 2: *parāmarśa*; p. 278, l. 2: *vimarśini*.

Trika Revelation = Absolute = Self

Alexis Sanderson notes that it is also at *TĀ* 35 that AG develops his general theory of the equation of Revealed Tradition (*āgama*) and Reflexive Awareness (*vimarśa*).[4] Sanderson's note appears in the context of his discussion of "Āgamic identity."[5] In this section then I will review his discussion of that notion as it points toward deeper dimensions of AG's vision of Revealed Tradition.

Sanderson links the equation of Āgama and *vimarśa* with the internalizing of what he calls "Āgamic identity" and the ritual through which this internalizing takes place.[6] Sanderson is saying that to self-represent oneself is to internalize a new identity, the Āgamic identity. In general the Trika practitioner re-presents himself, presents himself anew both to himself and to the world, internalizing "the Āgamic self of the Trika." In a real sense the practitioner becomes Āgama, the Revealed Tradition. Another way of saying this is that he becomes a channel for the Absolute; he opens his self to the Absolute so that the Absolute may express itself.

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[4] See also Sanderson, "Maṇḍala," p. 172 and p. 172, note 8: "The general theory of the equation of revelation *(āgamaḥ)* and self-representation (*vimarśaḥ*) is also developed at *ĪPVV* vol. 3, 84, 1-107, 3 and at *TĀ* 35 (*sarvāgamaprāmāṇyam*)." Sanderson also refers to various texts where levels of doctrine are coodinated with levels of reality (*tattvas*) and levels of experience.

[5] Sanderson, "Maṇḍala," p. 172, n. 8.

[6] Sanderson, "Maṇḍala," especially p. 172 and p. 172, n. 8. What follows is a summary of Sanderson's theories found in "Maṇḍala," and also "Abhinavagupta," "Trika," "Śaivism in Kashmir."

First of all then, the notion of self-representation is applied to the individual. The same notion, according to Sanderson, is applied to the Absolute and to the Trika Revelation.

As Sanderson states, this Āgamic identity is both a metaphysics and an exegesis. AG interprets the Āgamic identity, the Āgamic deity-self, metaphysically, i.e., he translates the Āgamic identity established in ritual into metaphysical terms, and, in particular in the terms of a metaphysics of nonduality.[7] The Trika III practitioner was to internalize this metaphysical ontology. Thus, not only is the Absolute equivalent to the Self, but insofar as the Absolute is a complex hierarchical system containing various levels of reality, so too does the Self contain various levels of reality.

Further, as the practitioner internalized this ontology he was also internalizing an exegesis, in particular, AG's exegesis, his hermeneutics of consciousness. The Self is not only Absolute (and all that entails), the Self is equated with the Trika Revelation.

Thus, the Trika Self, "revealed" in Trika ritual, is simultaneously both Absolute Reality and Absolute Word or Revelation. Precisely as the Absolute recreates itself in all the different levels of reality, so as Word, it recreates itself in all the different levels of scripture. In other words, the Absolute expresses itself both ontologically and scripturally. And so the Trika Self, understood as both Absolute and Word, also embodies these various levels of both ontology and revelation; at the core the Trika Self is

[7] Sanderson, "Maṇḍala," p. 170: "With Abhinavagupta, the leading expositor of this sect, in the third and final phase of its evolution (Trika III), we see the metaphysical translation of this Āgamic deity-self. . . ."

equivalent to both the Absolute, i.e., Bhairava, and the Word, i.e., Trika-Revelation. (However, at the same time it contains lower selves, identical to lower ontological levels and scriptural levels.)[8]

We get a clear picture of AG's reality now: a threefold identity, of Revelation, Bhairava, and Self; such is an important hermeneutic clue for understanding AG's notion of Revelation; what is true for Bhairava and the Self is at once true for Revelation. Each mirrors the other; even more than that, each is a replication of the other. Further, each of these realities or realms is multi-leveled; that is, each is able to manifest ("self-represent") itself on many levels; at its innermost core lies its real essence; as this innermost core manifests on grosser and grosser levels, there is movement away from the center. The center goes beyond the lower level, in the sense that it is deeper, more real; and at the same time it includes the others; all the lower levels participate in the center and point toward the center.

The Trika System as a "Complex System"

Complex Systems and Hermeneutics

Sanderson's depiction of the Trika System shows, among other things, that the Trika System was envisioned by Abhinavagupta as a great hierarchy, or what I will refer to as "a complex system."

This has been noted by others: Rastogi in his "Agenda for Future Research (on the *Tantrāloka*)" describes the Trika System as "an eclectic organism" containing hierarchies. Rastogi notes that for AG each higher

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[8] Sanderson, "Maṇḍala," p. 172 and p. 172, note 8.

level in the system both includes the lower level and transcends it.[9] For any one level, the next higher level is the culmination or fulfillment of that lower level; and this next higher level itself becomes fulfilled by a higher level, and so on, until the highest level, Trika. Rastogi concludes that AG orders in an ascending manner all systems--Tārkika, Śrauta, Bauddha, Ārhata, Vaiṣṇava, Siddhānta, Vāmaka, Dakṣa, Mata, Kula, Kaula, and Trika.

Envisioning one's own system as a great hierarchy or complex system is nothing new in the history of Hindu religious traditions and indeed in the history of other religious traditions: (1) The Naiyāyika Jayanta Bhaṭṭa (9th cent.), in his *Nyāyamañjarī* expresses the view that all traditions are from one Lord who appears in different forms to teach humans of different capacities.[10] (2) Such method reminds Rastogi of Śaṅkara's "synthetic unity of all Vedāntic propositions" (*vedāntavākyasamanvaya*).[11] (3) Bhartṛhari and others envisioned the Vedic Revelation as such a complex system (I will discuss this further below). (4) Dunuwila discusses a similar hermeneutical method used in Siddhānta, and notes that such models are also used in Islamic and Christian Theology.[12] (5) One also thinks here of

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[9] Rastogi, *Introduction*, p. 250. On *vedāntavākyasamanvaya*, see Halbfass, *India and Europe*, p. 356; and Halbfass, *Tradition and Reflection*, p. 55.

[10] Halbfass, *India and Europe*, pp. 360 and 562, n. 46.

[11] Rastogi, *Introduction*, p. 250.

[12] Rohan A. Dunuwila, *Śaiva Siddhānta Theology* (Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass, 1985), p. 47: first referred to in Dyczkowski, *Doctrine*, p. 227, n. 47.

the complexity of hermeneutics that evolved in Buddhism and in particular Buddhist Tantra.[13]

It might be argued that any theological system that must present itself in the context of other systems, that has achieved a high degree of self-awareness, and self-represents itself in representing the other, might naturally be envisioned as a great hierarchy, especially if the system is striving for inclusivity.[14] Such a vision may be viewed as an elegant and beautiful way of organizing and presenting one's system in relation to other systems; and in fact some have argued that a view of reality as a complex system is a beautiful model of reality in general.[15] Such a model in fact seems to work in many realms, not only the realm of Revelation; in other words, it is complex enough for organizing all of reality.

This seems especially applicable to the Hindu context: hierarchical models were indeed applied in many realms and in many ways by various Hindu religious traditions (enough in fact to make Dumont suggest that hierarchy was a key attribute in the organizations of reality by Hindu traditions). The fact that these models bear similarities to various Hindu symbols and images might also have played a part in their use.

Images that Evoke Complex Systems

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[13] The hermeneutics of the Tibetan Buddhist sage Tsong kha pa first comes to mind; other examples could be given from among East Asian Buddhist systematizers. See for example Donald Lopez, ed., *Buddhist Hermeneutics* (Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 1988); and also Halbfass, *India and Europe*, p. 562, n. 45 for further references.

[14] See also Halbfass, *India and Europe*, p. 356. Note Halbfass' use of the term "self-representation."

[15] See here Frederick Turner, *Beauty: The Value of Values* (Charlottesville: The University Press of Virginia, 1991).

The purpose of this section is to relate hierarchical systems, and the "complex system" of Trika Revelation in particular, to symbols and images, especially Hindu symbols and images. AG's model of revelation is a natural extension of common Hindu symbols and images. To explore this further we need to begin seeing the connection between the Trika system and certain types of symbols.

Toward this end, my first observation is that the conception of the Trika System as a "complex system" reminds me of the useful metaphor of a tree, a metaphor suggested by David Gordon White in helping to unwrap the complex folds of the Tantric world:

> The understanding of reality as a hierarchized system of correspondences emanating from and participating in an original essence, may be described through the metaphor of a tree, in which one hierarchy or element of a hierarchy may stand analogically for several other 'parallel' hierarchies as branches growing outward from a single trunk (the original, universal essence), the correspondences would be seen as cross-sections of a number of those branches such that the hierarchical element signified by a point ten feet out from the main trunk on branch 'a' would have as its corresponding hierarchical elements those points at the same distance from the main trunk on branches 'b', 'c', 'd', etc.[16]

White's idea has some interesting resonances in other disciplines. In particular, White's tree, along with other similar forms, is now being used in mathematics. The mathematician Rudy Rucker tells us that mathematicians have recently come up with a variety of these forms, called "fractals," which may help us deal better with the infinite complexity of

[16] David White, "Why Gurus are Heavy," *Numen* 31, no. 1 (July 1984), p. 44.

reality.[17] The modern theory of fractals is the creation of the mathematician Benoit Mandelbrot.[18] Mandelbrot's work has inspired many, including Ben-Ami Scharfstein, who, in urging scholars to use creative models which match the world's complexity and serve our imagination better, has suggested that such fractals as clouds, turbulence, and the "cascade" be used.[19] Specifically, Scharfstein suggests that the "cascade" can be used as a model "for whatever breaks up into fragments like itself, the fragments breaking up into others like themselves. . . ."[20] And, paralleling White, he suggests, that it could serve as a model for "the structures within structures of Indian mythology, and all the microcosmic-macrocosmic pairs that show a universe with texture, so to speak, the same at every level."[21]

Seeing the Trika System as a complex fractal system now leads us into the world of Hindu symbols and images, the common bond of which is that they represent complex systems.

Diana Eck has shown that the symbol of the tree, along with such other symbols such as the *garbha* ("embryo, womb, egg"), the body (*puruṣa* and so on), and the lotus, all primary cosmogonic/cosmological images,

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[17] Rudy Rucker, *Mind Tools: The Five Levels of Mathematical Reality* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1987), p. 103.
[18] Rucker, *Mind Tools*, p. 164.
[19] Ben-Ami Scharfstein, "The Contextual Fallacy," in *Interpreting Across Boundaries: New Essays in Comparative Philosophy*, ed. Gerald James Larson and Eliot Deutsch (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1988), p. 91.
[20] Scharfstein, "The Contextual Fallacy," p. 92.
[21] Scharfstein, "The Contextual Fallacy," p. 92. Perhaps the best examples of "structures within structures" would be found in the *Yogavāsiṣṭha*.

images of the "universe as an organic system of meanings," are all essential to the various Hindu traditions.[22]

According to Eck, what all these symbols share is that they all participate in both the dynamics of seed (*bīja*) and the dynamics of essence (*rasa*):

> Seed symbols are characterized by the intensification and condensation of the whole in the part, and the amplification of the part to the whole. Their growth is like the growth of the simple embryo or seed into the abundant complexity of the systemic whole. Seed amplifies to tree, and tree condenses to seed. The dynamics of the system are of *pravṛtti*, "rising," and "*nivṛtti*, "returning," expansion and condensation.[23]
>
> While *bīja* symbols are dense and concentric, *rasa* symbols are extensive and linear. . . .
>
> The common feature of . . . *rasa* symbols is the extension of meaning along the lines of "essence" or "sap." Like the xylem and phloem running up and down the stem, extending through the intricate pattern of branches and leaves, this kind of symbolism extends its threads of meaning up and down and from stem to branch. . . .[24]

And Eck notes that many other great symbols from the Hindu tradition share this same quality, i.e., that they participate in both seed dynamics and essence dynamics, such as Viṣṇu, the *liṅga*, and the temple.

Interestingly Eck notes that Tantric symbolism seems to especially participate in *rasa* dynamics:

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[22] Diana Eck, "Dynamics of Indian Symbolism," in *The Other Side of God: A Polarity in World Religions*, ed. Peter L. Berger (Garden City, N.Y.: Anchor Books, 1981), pp. 164-175.
[23] Eck, "Dynamics of Indian Symbolism," p. 165.
[24] Eck, "Dynamics of Indian Symbolism," p. 167.

> The religious movement of Tantra, which informs so much of the Indian symbolic universe, means, literally, "extending" and is built upon this type of symbolic dynamics.[25]

I will have more to say on *rasa* in my conclusion. For now I want to simply note that AG certainly uses both types of symbols. Two examples of *bīja* images are found in AG's system as he describes the intertwining of Universe and God: (1) "As the great banyan tree lies only in the form of potency in the seed, even so the entire universe with all the mobile and immobile beings lies as a potency in the heart of the Supreme." (2) "Just as a peacock with all its variegated plumage lies as a mere potential in the plasma of its egg, so the entire universe lies in the Śakti of the Supreme."[26] That AG's imagery participates in these two different dynamics, both *rasa* and *bīja*, might have been what Alper had in mind when he keenly observed that *prakāśa* symbolism relates to images of both "spatial effervescence" (this would be a *rasa* symbol) and "sea at the heart of all things" (this would be a *bīja* symbol).[27] So one answer to the question Where did AG's model of revelation come from? is that such a model is a natural extension of Hindu symbols and images that were part of the common data bank.

The Veda as a Complex System

Another answer, not necessarily unrelated, begins with the observation that it is a tendency of many Hindu systems of discourse--

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[25] Eck, "Dynamics of Indian Symbolism," p. 167.

[26] Jaideva Singh, *The Doctrine of Recognition* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1990), p. 8.

[27] Alper, "Ubiquity" p. 385. See also Muller-Ortega's creative extension of this idea in *Triadic Heart*, pp. 150-1.

theological, philosophical, mythological, aesthetic--to envision themselves as complex systems. Perhaps then this is a tendency inherent to Hinduism, built in from the start insofar as it is already a characteristic of the Vedic tradition. If this is true, then all later hermeneutics of Abhinavagupta's type might be seen as a variation (and often a more complex variation) on a method already begun in the Vedic tradition.

Wilhelm Halbfass' Description of the Veda

Here, Wilhelm Halbfass' profound discussion of "Human Reason and the Authority of the Veda" is most relevant.[28] His description of the Veda as a "complex system" seems transferrable's to AG's understanding of Trika; in other word, for AG, Triks was envisioned as a "complex system." Halbfass suggests that the inherent structure of the Veda ("the collection of Mantras, Brāhmaṇas, Āraṇyakas and Upaniṣads") naturally lent itself to the path it took, to the way that it was both used and thought about in later history, to the vision that this collection is one whole Revelation, the ultimate source of meaning and knowledge.[29]

Halbfass describes that inherent structure, seeing the Veda as both reflexive and "chaotic" (i.e., as what I have been calling a "complex

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[28] Halbfass, *Tradition and Reflection*, pp. 35-41, especially pp.39-41 where he attempts to answer the following questions: "What then is the connection between the Veda and Indian philosophical reflection? Is the 'Veda of the philosophers' essentially a fiction and projection? Is there any significant connection between the 'Veda itself' and the notion of the Veda in later epistemological reflection? Is the 'Veda itself,' the 'real' Veda, a real and essential source of classical Indian philosophy?"

[29] Halbfass, *Tradition and Reflection*, p. 40: "the later philosophical usages and retrospective conceptualizations of the Veda"; (and) "the way in which the entire Veda . . . has been presented as a 'source of knowledge' (*pramāṇa*), as one meaningful revelation, and as the final standard for philosophy itself."

system"). The Veda, he notes, contains multiple layers, often incongruous, representing the evolution of reflection. Such multiplicity and diversity, a "challenging and suggestive chaos," naturally lends itself to the later use and vision of the Veda; it "provides an elusive and ambiguous guidance, an open, yet authoritative framework, with suggestive hermeneutic patterns and precedents and appeals to human reflexivity."[30]

For Halbfass the chaotic structure of the Veda does not preclude it from containing "a certain structure." Structure is present, according to Halbfass, in the Veda as a whole, in the relationship between the different layers, in the ways the different layers refer to each other. I should note here then that he does not really mean "chaos," as he is actually referring to a "superstructure": while containing diversity and contradiction, the Veda contains structure which orders that diversity:

> There are mutual references and explicit interrelations and hierarchies between different parts of the Veda; there is also a great deal of self-reference, self-proclamation and self-reflection in these texts.[31]

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[30] Halbfass, *Tradition and Reflection*, p. 40: "The Veda . . . contains a multitude of different, apparently incompatible layers and sections. It contains a 'works portion' . . . and a 'knowledge portion' . . . , and a great variety of forms of expression and instruction. It documents the thought of many centuries and reflects fundamental changes in orientation. But, in a sense, it is this internal multiplicity and variety itself, this challenging and suggestive chaos, that accounts for the significance of the Veda in Hindu philosophy. It provides an elusive and ambiguous guidance, an open, yet authoritative framework, with suggestive hermeneutic patterns and precedents and inherent appeals to human reflexivity. This applies, most specifically, though in different, yet equally significant ways, to Bhartṛhari's and Śaṅkara's understanding of the Veda."

[31] Halbfass, *Tradition and Reflection*, p. 40.

The structure itself provided "hermeneutic suggestions and prototypes," laying the groundwork for later interpretations of the Veda and theories on the relations between this great complex system to human thought processes (and we could add here to Reality, God, Revelation, the Self).[32]

The Veda is loaded with infinite potential then as it "anticipates basic possibilities of human thought and orientation, of reflection, debate, and disagreement."[33]

The Veda as a whole is reflexive in that it seems aware of itself, and its multiple layers and statements and their interrelationships; and it seems to already contain a natural hierarchy of paths of salvation:

> [The Veda] seems . . . to separate and integrate more or less relevant, more or less authoritative statements, and to encompass and interrelate provisional and ultimate truth; and it seems to show ways of soteriological progression from lower to higher stages.[34]

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[32] Halbfass's depiction of the Vedic canon is one response to J. Z. Smith's notion of canon. Halbfass, *Tradition and Reflection*, p. 40: "All this provides hermeneutic suggestions and prototypes for later approaches to the Veda, and for the orthodox understanding of the relationship between human thought and Vedic revelation."

[33] Halbfass, *Tradition and Reflection*, pp. 40-41: "In its structured multiplicity, through its different layers and types of statements, the Veda seems to anticipate basic possibilities of human thought and orientation, of reflection, debate, and disagreement; it appears as a framework that can accomodate and neutralize the challenge of Buddhism and other traditions of "merely human" origin."

[34] Halbfass, *Tradition and Reflection*, p. 41: "It seems, moreover, to separate and integrate more or less relevant, more or less authoritative statements, and to encompass and interrelate provisional and ultimate truth; and it seems to show ways of soteriological progression from lower to higher stages."

The Veda then balances diversity and unity, containing fragments that make up one whole, a whole that reconciles these fragments and goes beyond them, and even tends to "transcend and supersede itself."[35]

The urge to ground oneself in an Absolute may be traced back to the Veda itself, which "exhibits a paradigmatic commitment to an absolute origin and foundation, and seems to provide clues for its own later role."[36]

It itself is "retrospective and reflexive;" anticipating the urge to link the periphery back to a center, the Veda as a whole having its center in the Ṛgveda. Halbfass's view may be summarized by the following formula then (the former relation naturally opens towards the latter relation):

Ṛgveda : Veda :: Veda : Orthodox Hindu Tradition[37]

And yet at the same time Halfass concludes that it might be said that the Veda is not only retro-spective but also pro-spective: there is a view in the Vedas as a whole that what comes later transcends what comes earlier. The Veda looks not only back to a primordial origin but also forward to its fulfillment; thus the Upaṇishads supersedes everything before it, and so on.[38]

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[35] Halbfass, *Tradition and Reflection*, p. 41: "Thus, the Veda represents not only prototypical variety, but also an elusive, yet highly suggestive orientation towards unity and identity and an inherent tendency to transcend and supersede itself."

[36] Halbfass, *Tradition and Reflection*, p. 41.

[37] Halbfass, *Tradition and Reflection*, p. 41: "It has its own retrospective and reflexive dimension and refers back to the Ṛgveda as its center and source. The epistemological and cosmological 'priority' (*prāthamya*) of the Ṛgveda within the Vedic corpus somehow foreshadows the sanctitiy and authority of the entire Veda within the orthodox Hindu tradition."

[38] Halbfass, *Tradition and Reflection*, p. 41: "Yet, in addition to such a retrospective commitment to an absolute origin, the Veda also seems to suggest that the "earlier" may be a preparation for the "later," that the Artharvaveda transcends the other Vedic Saṃhitās,

Reflexive Awareness as Intuitive Certainty

Another important concept for AG in *TĀ* 35 is the concept of Intuitive Certainty (or *a priori* certainty) (*prasiddhi*);[39] AG also elaborates on this in *TS* 21.[40]

Prasiddhi in Mīmāṃsa

The term *prasiddhi* and the related term *prasiddha* are used in the context of Mīmāṃsā philosophy: the Mīmāṃsa philosophers wanted to establish the authority of the Veda with reference to their theories about correct means of knowledge. In particular they wanted to establish the Veda as an independent valid source of knowledge, parallel to those of direct perception, inference, and so on. Further, the Veda by itself was understood as unique, expressing and teaching new knowledge, otherwise inaccessible. It was in this project that a division was drawn between Revelation and *lokaprasiddha* (what was known through "worldly means of knowledge and normal human experience").[41]

Prasiddhi in the Thought of Bhartṛhari

In contrast to the use of the term in Mīmāṃsā, the term *lokaprasiddhi* played a positive role in the thought of Bhartṛhari, even though, like the Mīmāṃsā philosophers, he still envisioned the Veda as authoritative

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and that the Upaniṣads supersede the Brāhmaṇas." Here Halbfass refers to Chāndogya VI as an example of the classical expression of the idea of including and transcending what comes before, and anticipating anything that comes later. (Halbfass, *Tradition and Reflection*, p. 49, n. 77)

[39] I am following Gnoli's translations.

[40] *TS* 21, pp. 195-197: first noted by Gnoli, *LDSS*, p. 762, note 1.

[41] Halbfass, *Tradition and Reflection*, p. 370.

Revelation. It is Bhartṛhari's use of the term that influences Abhinavagupta's thought.

How the term was used by Bhartṛhari is explained by Halbfass, who sees Bhartṛhri's philosophy as one of the most profound syntheses of plurality and unity, a positive acceptance of religious diversity seen in the context of the unity of the Veda, which itself contains all multiplicity, all diverse views.

For Bhartṛhari, the Absolute continually self-differentiates, overflowing and spilling itself into various levels of revelation. These levels of revelation range from the Veda itself, its most perfect form, to that of traditional human views. What makes the Absolute self-differentiate into the Veda is the same force responsible for the Veda itself continuing this process. In other words, all knowledge flows from the Veda, itself a manifestation of the Absolute; thus there is no rigid distinction between traditional knowledge (*prasiddhi*) and Vedic revelation. For Bhartṛhari then even traditional views (*prasiddhi*) participate in the Word-Absolute, their ground and source.[42] Gnoli writes:

> The concept of good and bad is not given to us by discursive knowing . . . but only by authority or revelation . . . which embraces not only the written word but all oral tradition: both are a valid means of knowledge, not contradicted . . . by the reality of the facts . . . for those who believe and adhere to it with all their hearts. . . . Revelation is, in this sense, that which one believes firmly (again, with all their heart). Who does not have such faith, says Abhinavagupta, in a tradition or authority, whatever it may be, is

[42] Halbfass, *Tradition and Reflection*, pp. 63-64.

like one who has no eyes, and is therefore without an essential organ of knowledge.[43]

Prasiddhi in Utpaladeva

Gnoli has also described the use of this term by Utpaladeva; continuing the line of thinking initiated by Bhartṛhari, Utpaladeva identifies Prasiddhi with Scripture.[44] Utpaladeva writes:

> Scripture is an *a priori* certainty (*prasiddhi*). It can never be exhausted by reasoning and its object is knowledge or ignorance. In each case, it is not discordant (with the reality of the facts) and it is therefore a means of knowledge. This *a priori* certainty is according to us the very vocality of the Lord, true and therefore not subject to discordance. All this that it gives, in one given time and place, is proved to be in a given mode, can indeed therefore be thought, without any doubts.[45]

Prasiddhi as Used by AG

In the thought of AG, Intuitive Certainty becomes equated with both Reflexive Awareness and Revealed Tradition.[46] Such Intuitive Certainty, whose natural form is sound or language, is also understood to be Clear Insight associated with harmony.[47] Further, Bhairava himself possesses Intuitive Certainty; and all human beings participate in Bhairava's primordial Intuitive Certainty, which self-differentiates and manifests on different levels (I will say more about this below).

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[43] Gnoli, *LDSS*, p. 762, n. 1.
[44] Gnoli, *LDSS*, p. 764, n. 3.
[45] Utpaladeva: noted in reference to *prasiddhi* and translated by Gnoli, LDSS, p. 764, n. 3. The English translation given here is my translation of Gnoli's Italian translation.
[46] See *TĀ* 35.1a-3a for AG's identification of Revealed Tradition and Intuitive Certainty; and *TĀ* 35.9b-10a for his identification of Reflexive Awareness and Intuitive Certainty.
[47] *TĀ* 35.19b-20a.

In identifying Intuitive Certainty with Reflexive Awareness, AG also states that it is something that belongs to the primordial past.[48]

A further connection to Reflexive Awareness is seen when he states that Bhairava whose nature is Reflexive Awareness is adorned with multitudes of Intuitive Certainty. Further, these Intuitive Certainties are the ultimate causes of enjoyment and liberation. The Intuitive Certainty of Bhairava divides itself into parts, these parts divide themselves into parts, and so on; in this way the Intuitive Certainty of Bhairava is transmitted into the various lineages via the gurus and the scriptures.[49] This Intuitive Certainty extends everywhere and is the ultimate cause of all ways of acting and behaving,[50] and all our means of knowing, such as direct perception.[51] All decisions, even when one is no longer an adult, such as what food to eat, are based on Intuitive Certainty; they are not based on direct perception or inference.[52]

AG continues the association of God and Intuitive Certainty, stating that the All-Knowing Knowing God is All-Knowing only because He possesses Intuitive Certainty.[53] AG also emphasizes the notion of Intuitive Certainty being transmitted into various lineages when he states that just as the Trika Revelation is only One, but becomes manifold for students of various capacities, in the same way, Intuitive Certainty is one and

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[48] *TĀ* 35.9b-10a.
[49] *TĀ* 35.14a-15b.
[50] *TĀ* 35.14a-15b and also 10b-11a.
[51] *TĀ* 35.3b-5a.
[52] *TĀ* 35.18b-19a.
[53] *TĀ* 35.19b-20a.

manifold.[54] One who is not on the highest path is attracted to the scripture that resonates with his (fragment of) Intuitive Certainty; that person values his kind of Intuitive Certainty over all others.[55]

Connection to *Prasāda*

In chapter 4 we saw that the term *prasāda* could be interpreted in terms of sexual fluids. Here AG uses the term again and as typical emphasizes its connection to consciousness.

One sense of Intuitive Certainty then is a type of illumination that happens naturally and from within; it is the primordial knowledge that one always already knows. This interpretation is supported by AG's linking of the term *prasiddhi* to the term *prasāda*. In particular, AG links it to the notion of *cetaḥprasāda*[56] ("illumination, openness, clearing, tranquillity of consciousness, mind, or heart") (and, similarly, to cetaḥprasatti[57] and "*saṃprasīdati . . . cetas*"[58]).

The term *pra-sad* literally means "to grow clear and bright," or "to become tranquil (as the sea or sky, applied to the mind)" or "to become satisfied."[59]

Halbfass translates *cetaḥprasāda* as "clarity and readiness of mind," noting that it had been used by Maṇḍana in the context of justifying desire

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[54] *TĀ* 35.35a-35b.
[55] *TĀ* 35.21a-22b.
[56] *TĀ* 35.7a.
[57] *TĀ* 35.10b.
[58] *TĀ* 35.6a-6b.
[59] Monier-Williams, *Sanskrit-English Dictionary*, s.v.

for God as a healthy desire; one wishes for and leans towards ultimate reality and in doing so is not negatively attached.[60]

One of the primary meanings for the term *prasāda* is "graciousness."[61] It might rightly be asked, "Whose graciousness?" Although *prasāda* is sometimes mistakenly understood as only the graciousness of God, in AG's thought, graciousness is able to work both ways; that is the relation between the individual's consciousness and God is a two-way relation, with the graciousness of each flowing towards the other.[62]

The term *cetaḥprasāda* in the thought of Abhinavagupta then may be understood as a clear and open consciousness, having as one of its senses the sense of graciousness of consciousness, i.e., graciousness and openness towards God, as well as one's openness to the possibility of God being reciprocally open and gracious.

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[60] In this paragraph, I am summarizing Halbfass; the full reference is not available at present.

[61] Monier-Williams, *Sanskrit-English Dictionary*, s.v. A noteworthy variant is "edible grace;" this is Wendy Doniger's translation I believe, although at present I do not have the specific reference.

[62] Also on "grace," see *TĀ* 29.166b-169b; here "grace" refers to sexual fluids. I am also reminded of Julian of Norwich's notion of "buxomness," a quality of both God and the devotee. In addition, although I again do not have the specific reference at present, I recall that David Shulman has observed in another context that the very act of worship is what allows God to reveal Himself; the implication is that God needs human beings.

Exposition of Selected Verses in the Fusion of All Scriptures (*samastaśāstramelana*) (*TĀ* 35.1-44b; pp. 3645-3670)

(1-3a)

Abhinavagupta writes:

> Now is expounded here the fusion of all scriptures. It is to be admitted that our entire way of acting is the extension of the past. And such precisely being unified as Intuitive Certainty is called "Revealed Tradition." Both positive and negative reasoning indeed depend on Intuitive Certainty. If the two were independent [of Intuitive Certainty], [then] given the multitude of appearances, how could there [even] be the possibility of those two [positive and negative reasoning]? [63]

The topic discussed in this chapter is the fusion (*melana*) of all scriptures (*śāstra*). Ordinary ways of behavior (*vyavahāra*) are linked to the primordial past (*purātana*). Further all these ways of behavior are unified (*anusandhā-*) as an Intuitive Certainty (or *a priori* certainty) (*prasiddhi*); this is what AG calls "Revealed Tradition" (*āgama*).

Such Intuitive Certainty is the primary means of knowing; other means of knowing, such as positive and negative reasoning (*anvayavyatireka*) in fact depend (*upajīv-*) on Intuitive Certainty. It allows us to make the right determinations out of the multitude of appearances (*vyakti-pūga*); otherwise all would be chaos.

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[63] *TĀ* 35.1a-3a:
athocyate samastānāṃ śāstrāṇāmiha melanam/
iha tāvatsamasto'yaṃ vyavahāraḥ purātanaḥ//1//
prasiddhimanusandhāya saiva cāgama ucyate/
anvayavyatirekau hi prasiddherupajīvakau//2//
svāyattatve tayorvyaktipūge kiṃ syāttayorgatiḥ/

Gnoli elaborates:

> The reasoning "where there is smoke there is fire," and negatively "where there is no fire there is no smoke," would not be able to take place if the fire were not already by itself the object of a *prasiddhi* or *a priori* certainty. If therefore it were not, observes Abhinavagupta, the reasoning would have as its object only a multiplicity of insufficiently known individual objects--the many single fires--by which it would not be in a position to deduce anything.[64]

(3b-5a: Direct Perception Depends on Intuitive Certainty)[65]

According to Abhinavagupta, not only inference but also direct perception (*pratyakṣa*) ultimately depends on Intuitive Certainty (*prasiddhi*) (this is noted by JR in his commentary); in this section AG focuses on direct perception.

Abhinavagupta says (beginning at 3b) that although it is true that direct perception depends on the right conditions, such as a certain eye, a certain self, a certain light, a certain object, etc., its ultimate basis nonetheless is certainty.

JR elucidates this passage: direct perception arises when all these things that AG has mentioned, the eye and so on, come together. However it is the reflexive awareness (*avamarśa*) of all these things that is responsible

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[64] Gnoli, *LDSS*, p. 762, n. 2.

[65] References to *vimarśa*, etc.: Jayaratha, p. 3647, l. 17: *avamarśa*; p. 3648, l. 9: *avamarśa*. No references by Abhinavagupta. See above for background on Intuitive Certainty (*prasiddhi*); AG refers to this again below.

for direct perception.[66] JR seems to be saying that Reflexive Awareness is what allows all these things to come together in our consciousness.

[66] Utpaladeva in the *IPK* uses the terms *avamarśa* (II.3.13 (v) (Utpaladeva's mother-of-pearl example)) and *avamṛśyatā* (IV.2 (v)): Torella, IPK, p. 237.
[67] *TĀ* 35.5b-6b:
nanu vastuśatākirṇe sthāne'pyasya yadeva hi//5//
paśyato jighrato vāpi spṛśataḥ saṃprasīdati/
cetastadevādāya drāk so'nvayavyatirekabhāk//6//

Reflexive Awareness seems to be playing the role of the master controller of various elements essential for any type of direct perception. Without Reflexive Awareness all would be chaos.

AG states (beginning at 4b) that it is obvious that direct perception depends on Intuitive Certainty if we consider the following. Imagine a child being born; he is alone, hungry, and entirely surrounded by an infinity of appearances and hence choices. How does he know what to do, what to grasp, what to look at, what to move toward?

According to JR, this child, just born, has not yet acquired any knowledge about others. In spite of this, he does in fact come to acquire knowledge about all our ordinary ways of acting. Such would not be possible if the child was not born with Intuitive Certainty, or A Priori Certainty, the nature of which is natural, innate Reflexive Awareness.

(5b-6b)

Someone might object to Abhinavagupta's previous statement: it is not that negative and positive reasoning depend on *a priori* certainty. Rather one learns this through trial and error. The child who is surrounded by a hundred of appearances and choices, through seeing and tasting and smelling various things, will come to only take that which is pleasing to him. It is through this process that he eventually possesses the ability to reason.

> Objection: "But in being surrounded by a hundred objects, for the one who is seeing, smelling, or touching also, indeed having taken

precisely only that which soothes his heart, soon he is participating in negative and positive reasoning."[1]

(7a-9a: Pacification of the Mind Created by Reflexive Awareness of Impression)[2]

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[1] *TĀ* 35.5b-6b:
nanu vastuśatākiṃe sthāne'pyasya yadeva hi//5//
paśyato jighrato vāpi spṛśataḥ samprasīdati/
cetastadevādāya drāk so'nvayavyatirekabhāk//6//

[2] References to *vimarśa*, etc.: Abhinavagupta, 35.7b: *vimarśa*; Jayaratha, p. 3649, l. 16: *vimarśa*; ll. 17-18: *vimarśa*; p. 3650, l. 9: *vimarśa*.

[3] The term translated as positive and negative reasoning is *anvaya-vyatireka*, which consists of two terms *anvaya* (equivalent to *anvayavyāpti*; meaning "pervasion in presence") and *vyatireka* (meaning "pervasion in absence"). The translation of these two terms is by B. K. Matilal, in *The Navya-Nyāya Doctrine of Negation*. (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1968), p. 85. According to Sitansusekhar Bagchi, *anvayavyatireki* is a type of inference: Bagchi, *Inductive Reasoning: A Study of Tarka and Its Role in Indian Logic* (Calcutta: M. Sinha, 1955), p. 99.

[4] See above on Gnoli's explanation of positive and negative reason.

[5] References to *mṛś* terms: Abhinavagupta, 35.9b: *vimarśa*; Jayaratha, p. 3650, l. 12: *vimarśa*; p. 3651, l. 1: *vimarśa*; l. 4: *vimarśa*.

[6] Torella, IPK, p. 271 (in his "Index").

[7] *TĀ* 35.10b-11a:
naca cetaḥprasattyaiva sarvo vyavahṛtikramaḥ//10//
mūlaṃ prasiddhistanmānaṃ sarvatraiveti gṛhyatām/

[8] *TĀ* 35.11b-12a:
pūrvapūrvopajīvitvamārgaṇe sā kvacitsvayam//11//
sarvajñarūpe hyekasminnihśaṅkaṃ bhāsate purā/

[9] *TĀ* 35.12b-13b:
vyavahāro hi naikatra samastaḥ ko'pi mātari//12//
tenāsarvajñapūrvatvamātreṇaiṣā na siddhyati/
bahusarvajñapūrvatve na mānaṃ cāsti kiṃcana//13//

[10] References to *mṛś* terms: Abhinavagupta, 35.14b: *vimarśa*; Jayaratha, p. 3653, l. 12: *parāmarśa*; p. 3654, l. 9: *āmarśa*.

In these verses we hear Abhinavagupta's response to the objection. What pleases the child does not arise from some means of knowing, such as direct perception or inference; it arises from reflexive awareness (*vimarśa*), in the form of past impressions (*prāgvāsanā*). So this reflexive awareness is linked to the past; it is not only some mere intuition (that is not linked to the past). For example, the desire to reach for food does not arise (simply out of present conditions). Again it depends on impressions from the past, which precisely is what reflexive awareness is; thus *a priori* certainty belongs to the primordial past. Further, our way of acting is not simply based on what pleases us. The ultimate basis is certainty.

Abhinavagupta writes (beginning at 7a):

> Look! The clarity of consciousness, which is related to a particular object, is created by reflexive awareness in the form of impressions of the past. It does not arise as a clarity from the outside, i.e., direct perception, inference, and so on.

This statement is related to what AG has posited earlier: our ability to reason and to know things depends on inner intuition or *a priori* certainty (*prasiddhi*). He supports this statement with the example of a newborn child who always already knows what to do, what to grasp, what to look at, and what to move toward.

Now one objection to this is that it is only through trial and error that the baby will experience first-hand which things have a calming effect and which do not. The ability to use reasoning is merely a logical outcome of the baby's experiments in life. So in other words this reasoning capacity is not the

result of the baby being born with some special intuition; rather the baby is born as a blank slate.[3]

Abhinavagupta responds to such an objection: It is indeed true that we experience this clarity of consciousness or soothing of the mind in the context of particular experiences of particular objects. However, ultimately it is not any external means of knowing, such as direct perception, inference, which is directly causing illumination of the mind. Rather, it simply arises from reflexive awareness, whose form consists of impressions of the past.[4]

(9b-10a: Certainty Belongs to a Prior Time)[5]

JR explains another possible objection (introducing 9b-10b): Even if "openness of consciousness" (*cetaḥprasādaḥ*) is created by past impressions, in the form of reflexive awareness, this still does not explain how certainty gives rise to this openness. Abhinavagupta answers this objection (beginning at 9b):

> If dependent on past impressions [or "karmic residual traces"[6]] (*vāsanā*); and if reflexive awareness [is] prior impression, [then] that has come into existence, this certainty, belonging to a prior time.

JR supports AG's answer with the following unidentified citation (the citation is unidentified; it is reminiscent of passages found in AG's commentaries on the *IPK*): "Reflexive Awareness is Revelation, that very Certainty, with no contradictions."

(10b-11a)

> And not by what pleases the heart only is all activity and manner. The basis is certainty, in any case it has that as its measure. Thus, it is to be admitted.[7]

(11b-12a)

We can keep tracing back the *a priori* certainty we ourselves have until we finally reach the *a priori* certainty of the Omniscient One in the primordial beginning.

> In tracing out this state of dependence through each preceding [basis], that [certainty] shines fearlessly in the beginning, anywhere of its own accord, indeed in that one only whose form is omniscient.[8]

(12b-13b)

In other words, we are not going to find in one place (at a certain point in time) the whole ensemble of our ways of acting possessed by a knowing subject. Further, it is dangerous to depend on this, as someone who was not omniscient could break the link. Well, what if there were many people that were omniscient? It seems that the same problem would exist: what came before them? So there is still no basis.

> The way of acting indeed is not in one place some collection in a knowing subject. Then only by being preceded by one who is not omniscient, this [certainty] is not established. And in the being preceded by many who are omniscient, there is not any basis.[9]

(14a-15b: Bhairava as Adorned by Hundreds of Certainties)[10]

The only basis is Bhairava, the Supreme Lord, whose nature is one of reflexive awareness, the reflexive awareness of both enjoyment and liberation,

and who is adorned by multitudes of certainties that cause both enjoyment and liberation. The certainty of Bhairava divides itself into parts which themselves divide into parts and so on; this certainty is carried through in the lineages of masters or in scriptures. This certainty extends everywhere and provides human beings with ways of acting; it is this certainty that causes human beings to act. Beginning at 14a, Abhinavagupta says:

> Adorned by multitudes of certainties, the cause of both enjoyment and liberation, and whose own-nature is the reflexive awareness of that, that [is] Bhairava, the Supreme Lord.

Abhinavagupta wants us to understand certainty here as a particular path, one tradition among hundreds. Each has as its basis the Trika Revelation, the Revelation of Bhairava. That Abhinavagupta's project parallels the project of Mīmāṃsa is signaled by the use of the term *mūla*. Their project is termed *vedamūlatva*, "rooting" or "anchoring in the Veda," and involves affirming or rejecting other traditions, based on whether or not it ultimately "agrees" with the Veda. According to this view, all legitimate traditions are based in the Veda, derived from the Veda, and depend on its authority.[11]

Abhinavagupta continues at 15a:

> And then, this certainty, by forming [itself into] parts of parts, enters into the [oral] lineage or the [written] scripture and extended outward [in this way] would give rise to the interacting among human beings.

[11] Halbfass, *India and Europe*, pp. 359 and 366.

Commenting on this, JR cites the following:

> The shooting up of the reflexive awareness of scripture from worldly to secret, consisting of the development of revelation-knowers via the mouth, the Word, in this way, comes from the Supreme Lord.

TĀ 35 Without References to Reflexive Awareness

The remainder of *TĀ* 35 contains no references by AG to reflexive awareness. For the sake of continuity, I include below my paraphrases of the remainder of AG's verses and some additional notes. I have also included my complete translation of TĀ 35 in the appendix to this chapter.

(16a-17b)

Certainty causes anyone who is pure of heart to naturally depend on the Śaiva tradition. Further, all other traditions are incomplete and hence do not provide people with the fruit of liberation. If someone depends on these traditions they will only attain the fruit that these traditions can offer then.

(18a-19a)

Even when I am no longer a child I make my decision about what food to eat only because of this intuitive certainty, not from any external means of

knowing, such as direct perception or reasoning; that would be logically impossible.

(19b-20b)

Certainty then is clear insight; this insight arises from harmony. Further, Certainty is in the form of sound or language. In fact the one called the "Knower" possesses such Certainty; only with Certainty does the Knower know all, and have no doubt or lack of knowledge. Such a Knower is self-created and does not depend on external means of knowing outside of himself; and it is that self-created aspect that makes him the All-Knowing Auspicious One.

(21a-22b)

One who is not enlightened naturally be attracted to the scripture which resonates with his consciousness. He will take that as the highest truth, and see other scriptures (even ones that are seen from Abhinavagupta's point of view as superior) as inferior. Others should hold the Śaiva scriptures as the highest; and this is how one comes to be enlightened in fact. This is similar to Abhinavagupta's fundamental understanding of ritual: it is what makes the impossible possible;[12] similarly, taking something as the highest reality brings that reality into being.

[12] Sanderson, "Maṇḍala and Āgamic Identity" p. 210 (this is a statement made by Sanderson in the "Discussion" that is appended to "Maṇḍala and Āgamic Identity").

(23a-23b)

There is only one tradition. It is continually revealed by Śiva in various paths, ranging from paths of asceticism to paths of enjoyment.

(24a-24b)

Any path, any means is a manifestation of the one means, the one tradition. It does not matter what the path leads to: *dharma, artha, kāma, mokṣa;* it does not matter how complete its fruit is. That one path is the path of Śambhu, the Benevolent One. In addition to referring to Śiva here, AG is likely referring to one of his own teachers, Śambhunātha, who taught him this system of the encounter of scriptures.[13]

(25a-25b)

Because people are concerned with various objects, the Śambhu tradition provides various fruits and thus has various methods to reach these fruits. This in no way implies a contradiction.

[13] *TĀ* 35.44b.

(26a-27b)

In reality all the various traditions and texts--the un-sacred, the Vedic, Sāṅkhya, Yogasūtra, Pañcarātra, Buddhist, Jain, Nyāya treatises, Meaning of the Word (Grammar) treatises, Siddhānta treatises, Śākta, and so on--arise from (the five different faces of) Brahmā, in the form of Sadyojāta and so on.[14]

(28a-28b)

Any tradition will have many sub-traditions, schools, religious orders within it. Accordingly, the purifications that a follower of a tradition undertakes varies from order to order even within one tradition. And it is the same for Abhinavagupta's own tradition; thus, for example, some will participate in the purification of the raising/extricating of the *liṅga* while others may not.

(29a-29b)

Just as within any one tradition, those in the lower religious orders within it do not achieve the results attained in the higher orders, so also those in lower traditions, for example Pāñcarātra, will never achieve identity with Śiva, a result one could attain if they were in AG's tradition.

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[14] In his commentary JR refers to *SvT* 8.31, 11.45, and 11.82: this is first noted by Gnoli in *LDSS*. See Arraj's discussion of *SvT* 8 and 11 in "*The* Svacchandatantram," pp. 204 ff. and 298 ff.

(30a-30b)

So really there is only one tradition. If there were different traditions one could achieve the same result in two different ways; and that is not the case. And all the other traditions, from the non-sacred treatises through Vaiṣṇavite, Buddhist, and Śaivite, are grounded in this one tradition.

(31a-32b)

And that highest tradition, in which one reaches the highest abode, is Trika. It is also called "Kula," because it is undivided in all, and because it is indestructible. AG then uses the following analogy: each limb of the body is distinct, with some being higher and some lower; at the same time each participates in and is grounded in one and living whole, having life as its essence. AG says that it is the same with each limb of Trika; each is distinct, with some being higher and some lower, while at the same time having Trika as its essence; when all the limbs of Trika are taken together they are seen as the unique, holistic, living Trika.

(33a-34b)

Thus it is said in the *Kālikulatantra*, the Great Tradition transcends the five currents, and is revealed as the essence of the ten divisions and of the eighteen divisions. Just as the essence of the flower is the fragrance, the

essence of the sesame seed is the oil, the essence of the body is life, and the essence of water is the nectar of immortality, so in that way the essence of all religious treatises is Kula, abiding within all.

(35a-35b)

The Trika revelation is really only one, and yet becomes manifold in order to serve students of the religious treatises with different capacities. The same is true for what is called Intuitive Certainty: it is really only one, and yet becomes manifold in order to serve our own multitudes or the multitudes of others.

(36a-36b)

Everything then comes from Śiva and therefore must not be criticized: this includes Sāṃkhya, Yoga, Pāñcarātra, and the Vedas.

(37a-37b)

But if you extract out of the one revelation parts of parts, separating them from their ground, they can distort. This is the case with all traditions of the world, which have been ripped out from unity, and thus they actually confuse people.

(38a-40a)

Some think that there is more than one tradition (and yet one goal). If one wants to think this, then he should realize that all the traditions deal with different objects and have different goals. Naturally, some have higher goals, and some lower. It is important to know that it is not the case that all the traditions are dealing with the same goal in different ways.[15] Further, what makes a tradition valid is not the fact that it has permanence and general agreement. Although if those were the criteria, again AG's tradition would be valid. Here I note that Dyczkowski has summed this up best, with reference to Kṣemarāja:[16]

> Kṣemarāja (*Pr.Hṛ.*, pp. 40-47) declares that the conclusions various philosophical systems reach concerning ultimate reality are all roles that the universal Self assumes and that they vary according to the degree in which it discloses its true nature. Similarly, Abhinavagupta maintains on the authority of the *Svacchandatantra* that other schools of thought such as the Sāṃkhya or Veda all originate from Śiva and so should be respected. But even so, these traditions are mere fragments of a much vaster tradition and so mislead those who follow them.

[15] This is perhaps one of the first arguments against "extreme relativism;" the basis of AG's argument seems to be that there is only one "reality." Although others may have said this, Abhinavagupta is using this assumption to draw out the conclusion that "not anything goes." For a more detailed argument against "extreme relativism," see Hans Peter Duerr, *Dreamtime: Concerning the Boundary between Wilderness and Civilization*, trans. Felicitas Goodman (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1985), pp. 89 ff.

[16] Dyczkowski, *Aphorisms*, p. 191, n. 9, in reference to *TĀ* 35.36a-40a.

(40b-42a)

Some people make things up so as to explain why traditions are different; they talk about different levels of discourse, i.e., what is an explanation, what is imagined discourse, what is untruth, and what is praise. By trying to include too much they end up with no valid tradition. The only real criteria is to be understood. And that has been AG's measure in looking into the nature of religious treatises and their various positions.

(42b-43a)

Just as effort extended within the most essential limb will truly possess fruit, in the same way, in order to achieve the fruit some one should extend effort in AG's system, incited by Śambhu.

(43b-44a)

The Great Lord has said in several places in the sacred treatises that for such a tradition the student who would be qualified to follow it is indeed rare.

(44b)

Just as it has been described to AG by Śambhunātha AG has described now the Fusion of the Scriptures.

Chapter V Appendix

Translation of *TĀ* 35: "The Fusion of All Scriptures"[1]

(1a-3a)

Now is expounded here the fusion of all scriptures. It is to be admitted that our entire way of acting is the extension of the past. And such precisely being unified as Intuitive Certainty is called "Revealed Tradition." Both positive and negative reasoning indeed depend on Intuitive Certainty. If the two were independent [of Intuitive Certainty], [then] given the multitude of appearances, how could there [even] be the possibility of those two [positive and negative reasoning]? [2]

(3b-5a)

[JR] Not only with respect to inference is there *a priori* certainty, the cause, but even with respect to direct perception [there is this *a priori* certainty]. Thus he says.[3]

[AG] Although direct perception arises from a particular eye, self, light, object, and so on, it depends, in that case, ultimately on the *a priori* certainty, having such as its nature.[4]

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[1] I have also sometimes added JR's commentary when relevant to reflexive awareness.

[2] *TĀ* 35.1a-3a:
athocyate samastānāṃ śāstrāṇāmiha melanam/
iha tāvatsamasto'yaṃ vyavahāraḥ purātanaḥ//1//
prasiddhimanusandhāya saiva cāgama ucyate/
anvayavyatirekau hi prasiddherupajīvakau//2//
svāyattatve tayorvyaktipūge kiṃ syāttayorgatiḥ/

[3] *TĀV*, comm. on 35.3b-4a, p. 3647:
na kevalamanumāne eva prasiddhirnibandhanaṃ, yāvat pratyakṣe'pityāha

[4] *TĀ* 35.3b-4a:
pratyakṣamapi netrātmadīpārthādiviśeṣajam//3//
apekṣate tatra mūle prasiddhiṃ tāṃ tathātmikām/

[JR] Although direct perception is born from the totality of sense and so on, in that case, i.e., with respect to the form of sense and so on, [direct perception] ultimately depends on that *a priori* certainty, having such as its nature, i.e., consisting of the reflexive awareness of the same form [of sense and so on], which is the cause of the activity of all; without that, i.e., in the absence of the activity of the sense and so on, nothing at all would be affected. Such is the meaning.[5]

[JR] This precisley, by means of distinction, manifests.[6]

[AG] A child is born alone, hungry, entirely surrounded. What would he do, what would he take to himself, with what would he see, toward what would he move?[7]

[JR] For the child born in the daytime, in a place surrounded by a multitude of many distinct objects everywhere is indeed hungry and longing [for food], [all] alone, not having yet acquired any knowledge about others; without certainty, whose nature is reflexive awareness of the self, the child would not possess the conventions of giving and taking in his limited environment. Such is the meaning.[8]

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[5] *TĀV*, comm. on 35.3b-4a, p. 3647:
indriyādisāmagrījanyaṃ pratyakṣamapi tatra indriyādirūpe mūle tathātmikāṃ tādrūpyāvamarśamayīṃ tāṃ sarvavyavahāranibandhanabhūtāṃ prasiddhimapekṣate tāṃvinā indriyādipreraṇābhāve na kiñcit sidhyedityarthaḥ//
[6] *TĀV*, comm. on 35.4b-5a, p. 3648:
etadeva vyatirekadvāreṇa vyanakti
[7] *TĀ* 35.4b-5a:
abhitaḥsaṃvṛte jāta ekākī kṣudhitaḥ śiśuḥ//4//
kiṃ karotu kimādattāṃ kena paśyatu kiṃ vrajet/
[8] *TĀV*, comm. on 35.4b-5a, p. 3648:
tadaharjāto hi bālaḥ sarvato nānāvidhārthasārthasaṃvalite sthāne kṣudhitaḥ sākāṅkṣo'pi ekākī aprāptaparopadeśaḥ kiṃ karotu vinā svāvamarśātmikāṃ prasiddhiṃ niyataviṣayahānādānavyavahāro bālasya na syādityarthaḥ//

(5b-6b)

Objection: "But in being surrounded by a hundred objects, for the one who is seeing, smelling, or touching also, indeed having taken precisely only that which soothes his heart, soon he is participating in negative and positive reasoning."[9]

(7a-9a)

[JR] The following might be asked: Where does the clarity of consciousness come from? With rejection, Abhinavagupta explains.[10]

[AG] Look! The clarity of consciousness, which is related to a particular object, is created by reflexive awareness in the form of impressions of the past. It does not arise as a clarity from the outside, i.e., direct perception, inference, and so on.[11]

[JR] The following might be said: The clarity of consciousness indeed is the form of reflexive awareness that has shined forth spontaneously, pure intuition. Thus, by means of reflexive awareness, which consists of impressions from past, [the clarity of consciousness] is created. Thus, how is it said [otherwise]? Having raised this objection, Abhinavagupta says:[12]

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[9] *TĀ* 35.5b-6b:
nanu vastuśatākīrṇe sthāne'pyasya yadeva hi//5//
paśyato jighrato vāpi spṛśataḥ saṃprasīdati/
cetastadevādāya drāk so'nvayavyatirekabhāk//6//
[10] *TĀV*, comm. on 35.7a-9a, p. 3649:
nanu cetaḥprasādo'pi kutastya iti sākrośamupaditśati
[11] *TĀ* 35.7a-8a:
hanta cetaḥprasādo'pi yo'sāvarthaviśeṣagaḥ/
so'pi prāgvāsanārupavimarśaparikalpitaḥ//7//
na pratyakṣānumānādibāhyamānaprasādajaḥ/
[12] *TĀV*, comm. on 35.7a-9a, p. 3649:
nanu cetaḥprasādo hi tatkālollasitavimarśarūpaṃ pratibhāmātramiti prāgvāsanārūpeṇa vimarśena parikalpita iti kimuktamityāśaṅkya āha

[AG] This very pure intution is not dependent on past impressions. The desire to take food from the earth does not arise in the male child.[13]

[JR] This clarity of consciousness is precisely dependent on previous impressions; it is not on the other hand pure intuition with no cause. In this way indeed, for the male child, one who has obtained a moderate degree of development, by means of disinterestedness in elementary substances, like milk and so on, the desire of eating food from the earth [arises]; and not [otherwise] in this way. Thus, on this matter, consisting of reflexive awareness [is] the impression from the past [right] from the beginning. But that which is eating from the earth by a child and so on is created by the desire of eating only. Thus, there is no significance at all [in the possible objections].[14]

(9b-10a)

[JR] Well, there may be indeed the clarity of consciousness created by past impressions whose form is reflexive awareness. To that extent, however, what is the occasion of certainty? Having raised a possible objection, [Abhinavagupta] says:[15]

[AG] If dependent on past impressions (*vāsanā*); and if reflexive awareness [is] prior impression, [then] that has come into existence, this certainty, belonging to a prior time..[16]

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[13] *TĀ* 35.8b-9a:
prāgvāsanopajīvyetat pratibhāmātrameva na//8//
na mṛdabhyavahārecchā puṃso bālasya jāyate/

[14] *TĀV*, comm. on 35.7a-9a, p.3650:
etat cetaḥprasannatva prāgvāsanānurodhi eva na punarākasmikaṃ pratibhāmātram/ evaṃ hi puṃsaḥ kathañcidvṛddhimupeyuṣo bālasya stanyādivat tattvānabhisandhānena mṛdabhyavahārecchapi syāt; naca evamiti atra vimarśātmā prāgvāsanaiva mūlam/ yattu bālādermṛdbhakṣaṇaṃ, tat jighatsāmātraparikalpitamiti na kaścit doṣaḥ//

[15] *TĀV*, comm. on 35.9b-10a, p. 3650:
nanu bhavatu nāma vimarśarūpaprāgvāsanāparikalpitaścetaḥprasādaḥ, tāvatā tu prasiddheḥ ko'vakāśa ityāśaṅkya āha

[16] *TĀ* 35.9b-10a:
prāgvāsanopajīvī cedvimarśaḥ sā ca vāsanā//9//

[JR] Well if the past impressions indeed are the cause of the clarity of consciousness, and if the prior impression is precisely reflexive awareness, then that [prior impression] is this prior in time certainty [having] come into existence; this precisely, the authentic form, belongs to it [the prior impression]. Such is the meaning. As it is said:

> Reflexive awareness is Revelation, that very certainty, with no contradictions.[17]

(10b-11a)

And not by what pleases the heart only is all activity and manner. The basis is certainty, in any case it has that as its measure. Thus, it is to be admitted.[18]

(11b-12a)

In tracing out this state of dependence through each preceding [basis], that [certainty] shines fearlessly in the beginning, anywhere of its own accord, indeed in that one only whose form is omniscient.[19]

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prācyā cedāgatā seyaṃ prasiddhiḥ paurvakālikī/

[17] *TĀV*, comm. on 35.9b-10a, pp. 3650-1:
nanu yadi prāgvāsanaiva cetaḥprasādasya
nivandhanaṃ, sāca prācyā vāsanā yadi vimarśa eva; tat sā iyamāgatā paurvakālikī prasiddhiḥ
idameva asyāstāttvikaṃ rūpamityarthaḥ/ yaduktaṃ
'vimarśa āgamaḥ sā sā prasiddhiravigītikā/'
iti//

[18] *TĀ* 35.10b-11a:
naca cetaḥprasattyaiva sarvo vyavahṛtikramaḥ//10//
mūlaṃ prasiddhistanmānaṃ sarvatraiveti gṛhyatām/

[19] *TĀ* 35.11b-12a:
pūrvapūrvopajīvitvamārgaṇe sā kvacitsvayam//11//
sarvajñarūpe hyekasminniḥśaṅkaṃ bhāsate purā/

(12b-13b)

The way of acting indeed is not in one place some collection in a knowing subject. Then only by being preceded by one who is not omniscient, this [certainty] is not established. And in the being preceded by many who are omniscient, there is not any basis.[20]

(14a-15b)

[JR] And therefore, [there is] one only, consisting of the reflexive awareness of the full "I," all-knowing, Supreme Lord, being the foundation of all certainties.[21]

[AG] Adorned by multitudes of certainties, the cause of both enjoyment and liberation, and whose own-nature is the reflexive awareness of that, that [is] Bhairava, the Supreme Lord.[22]

[JR] And this cause of the dimension of human behavior and activity,[23] arisen from the Supreme Lord, is twofold. Thus, he says:[24]

[AG] And then, this certainty, by forming [itself into] parts of parts, enters into the [oral] lineage or the [written] scripture and extended

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[20] *TĀ* 35.12b-13b:
vyavahāro hi naikatra samastaḥ ko'pi mātari//12//
tenāsarvajñapūrvatvamātreṇaiṣā na siddhyati/
bahusarvajñapūrvatve na mānaṃ cāsti kiṃcana//13//
[21] *TĀV*, comm. on 35.14a-14b, p. 3653:
ataśca eka eva pūrṇāhaṃparāmarśamayaḥ sarvajñaḥ parameśvaraḥ samastaprasiddhinibandhanabhūta ityāha
[22] *TĀ* 35.13b-14a:
bhogāpavargataddhetuprasiddhiśataśobhitaḥ/
tadvimarśasvabhāvo'sau bhairavaḥ parameśvaraḥ//14//
[23] This is how Torella translates *lokavyavahāra* in IPK, p. 103.
[24] *TĀV*, comm. on 35.15a-15b, p. 3653:
dvidhā ca iyaṃ parameśvarāt pravṛttā lokavyavahāranibandhanamityāha

outward [in this way] would give rise to the interacting among human beings.[25]

[JR] "Forming parts of parts:" from division into place and family and so on, or from division into worldly and Vedic and so on. "Lineage:" whose form is revealing through uninterrupted oral tradition. "Scripture:" treatise [i.e., [written] "foundation"]. "Spread out:" from the absence of disagreement within. As it is said:

> The shooting up of the reflexive awareness of scripture from worldly to secret, consisting of the development of revelation-knowers via the mouth, the Word, in this way, comes from the Supreme Lord.[26]

(16a-17b)

By that [certainty] precisely, from adulthood, all, choosing support for their way of acting, good people, entirely depend on the Śaivite primordial tradition only; incomplete on the other hand are the others; therefore they do not participate in the fruit of liberation; in accordance with what they depend on, they participate in that fruit to that extent.[27]

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[25] *TĀ* 35.15a-15b:
tataścāṃśāṃśikāyogātsā prasiddhiḥ paramparām/
śāstraṃ vāśritya vitatā lokānsaṃvyavahārayet//15//
[26] *TĀV*, comm. on 35.15a-15b, p. 3654 :
aṃśāṃśiketi deśakulādibhedāt laukikavaidikādibhedādvā/ paramparāmiti mukhapāramyparyanirūḍhirūpām/ śāstramiti nibandhanam/ vitateti antaravigānābhāvāt/ yaduktaṃ
'laukikādirahasyāntaśāstrāmarśaprarohiṇī/
vaktrāgamajñarūḍhyātmā vāgitthaṃ pārameśvarī//'
iti//
[27] *TĀ* 35.16a-17b:
tayaivāśaiśavātsarve vyavahāradharājuṣaḥ/
santaḥ samupajīvanti śaivamevādyamāgamam//16//
apūrṇāstu pare tena na mokṣaphalabhāginaḥ/
upajīvanti yāvattu tāvattatphalabhāginaḥ//17//

(18a-19a)

Also in the going away of childhood also, regarding which food that one sets out to eat, that is with reference to intuitive certainty only, [and it is] not from direct perception, [and] not from reasoning, as it is logically
impossible. . . .[28]

(19b-20b)

[JR] Well, if [such is] so, then would there be such doubt of the coming forth [of the various scriptures and oral traditions] by means of certainty also? Having raised a possible objection, [Abhinavagupta] says:[29]

[AG] And certainty, clear insight arisen from harmony, consisting of a sounding [language], the own-being of a knower, as in that [certainty] this [knower] does not doubt at all. By means of its being self-created precisely, that [knower] indeed is the All-Knowing Auspicious One.[30]

[JR] Indeed certainty, because of being primordially risen, shining forth as beyond discord, whose form is clear insight consisting of self-reflexive awareness, [is] precisely the own-being of the knower. In that certainty, by means of being a doer of the activity of the process of reflexive awareness, from the force of being self-created precisely, this knower nowhere at all doubts, i.e., would not be uncertain, as that

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[28] *TĀ* 35.18a-19a:
bālyāpāye'pi yadbhoktumannameṣa pravartate/
tatprasiddhyaiva nādhyakṣānnānumānādasambhavāt//18//
naca kāpyatra doṣāśāśaṅkāyāśca nivṛttitaḥ/

[29] *TĀV*, comm. on 35.19b-20b, p. 3657:
nanu yadi evaṃ, tat prasiddhyā pravartamānasyāpi kimevamāśaṅkā na syādityāśaṅkya āha

[30] *TĀ* 35.19b-20b:
prasiddhiścāvigānotthā pratītiḥ śabdanātmikā//19//
mātuḥ svabhāvoḥ yattasyāṃ śaṅkate naiṣa jātucit/
svakṛtatvavaśādeva sarvavitsa hi śaṅkaraḥ//20//

[knower] is the All-Knowing Auspicious One and no other; i.e., in reality whose form is that [knower] is that [All-Knowing Auspicious One]. Such is the meaning.[31]

(21a-22b)

But as long as one does not possess the state of Śiva, for that amount of time one does not doubt that very certainty which is of the same extent as his own nature; [also] he would be a doubter of the other [certainties]. One thinks exceedingly much of that certainty. Thus, one who will in the future possess Śiva-ness thinks of that certainty firmly.[32]

(23a-23b)

And one only is the tradition, which is continually displayed by the All-Pervading, All-Seeing, in the path both leading toward and arising out of [the All-Pervading].[33]

(24a-24b)

The one means [that leads] toward the variety of fruits, differing in being complete or not complete and so on, of duty, profit, pleasure, and liberation, is the tradition of Śambhu.[34]

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[31] *TĀV*, comm. on 35.19b-20b, p. 3657:
prasiddhirhi satatoditatvādavigānena ullasitā svāvamarśātmapratītirūpā pramātuḥ svabhāva eveti tasyāṃ prasiddhau parāmarśanakriyākartṛtvena svakṛtatvavaśādeva eṣa pramātā kadācidapi na śaṅkate vicikitset, yadasau sarvavit śaṅkara eva vastutastadrūpa eva asāvityarthaḥ//20//

[32] *TĀ* 35.21a-22b:
yāvattu śivatā nāsya tāvatsvātmānusāriṇīm/
tāvatīmeva tāmeṣa prasiddhiṃ nābhiśaṅkate//21//
anyasyāmabhiśaṅkī syādhūyastāṃ bahu manyate/
evaṃ bhāviśivatvo'mūṃ prasiddhiṃ manyate dhruvam//22

[33] *TĀ* 35.23a-23b
eka evāgamaścāyaṃ vibhunā sarvadarśinā/
darśito yaḥ pravṛtte ca nivṛtte ca pathi sthitaḥ//23//

(25a-25b)

In this--from the the diversity of horizons--giver of a variety of fruits, even the teaching of a variety of means would not carry with it contradiction.[35]

(26a-27b)

The un-sacred, the Vedic, Sāṅkhya, Yogasūtra, Pañcarātra, Buddhist, Jain, Nyāya treatises, Meaning of the Word [Grammar] treatises, Siddhānta treatises, Śākta, and so on, all, arise from Brahmā, as it is said in the glorious *Svacchandatantra*, in their various forms, Sadyojāta, etc.[36]

(28a-28b)

Just as even in one and the same [tradition], in the [tradition of] Veda, and so on, for a follower of this or that religious order there are different purifications, so even here [there are different purifications], concerning the raising/extricating of the *liṅga*, and so on.[37]

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[34] *TĀ* 35.24a-24b:
dharmārthakāmamokṣeṣu pūrṇāpūrṇādibhedataḥ/
vicitreṣu phaleṣveka upāyaḥ śāmbhavāgamaḥ//24//
See also Dyczkowski, *Stanzas*, p. 402, note 281.
[35] TĀ 35.25a-25b:
tasminviṣayavaiviktyādvicitraphaladāyini/
citropāyopadeśo'pi na virodhāvaho bhavet//25//
[36] *TĀ* 35.26a-27b:
laukikaṃ vaidikaṃ sāṅkhyaṃ yogādi pāñcarātrakam/
baudhārhatanyāyaśāstraṃ padārthakramatantraṇam//26//
siddhāntatantraśāktādi sarvaṃ brahmodbhavaṃ yataḥ/
śrīsvacchandādiṣu proktaṃ sadyojātādibhedataḥ//27//
[37] *TĀ* 35.28a-28b:
yathaikatrāpi vedādau tattadāśramagāminaḥ/
saṃskārāntaramatrāpi tathā liṅgoddhṛtādikam//28
This is discussed in *TĀ* 22: noted by both Gnoli and Rastogi. See Rastogi, *Introduction*, p. 233, referencing *TĀV*, p. 3362 and *TĀ* 35.28a-28b.

(29a-29b)

And just as there in the lowest religious order, [one does] not reach the fruits of the superior order, in the same way, in the Pāñcarātra tradition, and so on, [one does] not [attain] the state of Śiva.[38]

(30a-30b)

One only is the tradition therefore. In that [tradition], beginning with the non-sacred treatises up through Vaiṣṇavite, Buddhist, and Śaivite, all indeed is grounded.[39]

(31a-32b)

That which is the supreme abode, for someone to be reached, is called the "Trika;" because [it is] undivided in all, [and] because [it is] indestructible, that precisely is called "Kula." Just as the limbs of the body, dividing into higher and lower parts, [and] separated, are one and living [at the same time], so in that way there is the one Trika, in all [traditions], according to the religious treatises.[40]

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[38] *TĀ* 35.29a-29b:
yathāca tatra pūrvāsminnāśrame nottarāśramāt/
phalameti tathā pāñcarātrādau na śivātmatām//29//
[39] *TĀ* 35.30a-30b:
eka evāgamastasmāttatra laukikaśāstrataḥ/
prabhṛtyāvaiṣṇavādbauddhācchaivātsarvaṃ hi niṣṭhitam//30//
See also Dyczkowski, *Stanzas*, p. 313, n. 5.
[40] *TĀ* 35.31a-32b:
tasya yattat paraṃ prāpyaṃ dhāma tat trikaśabditam/
sarvāvibhedānucchedāt tadeva kulamucyate//31//
yathordhvādharatābhāksu dehāṅgeṣu vibheditṣu/
ekaṃ prāṇitamevaṃ syāt trikaṃ sarveṣu śāstrataḥ//32//

(33a-34b)

And as it is said in the glorious *Kālikulatantra*, free from the five currents, it is revealed as the essence of the ten and eighteen divisions. Just as in the flower, there is the fragrance, in the sesame seed, there is the oil, in the body, the life, and in the water, the drink of immortality, so in that way in the *śāstras*, the Kula abides within.[41]

(35a-35b)

That revelation is one only; this is manifold among the diverse students of the religious treatises; in that same way this intuitive certainty [is] connected with our own multitudes or other multitudes [i.e., is one and manifests as manifold].[42]

(36a-36b)

One should not ridicule Sāṃkhya, Yoga, Pāñcarātra, and the Vedas, for all arise from Śiva; thus [it is said] in the teaching of the *Svacchandatantra*.[43]

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[41] *TĀ* 35.33a-34b:
śrīmatkālīkule coktaṃ pañcasrotovivarjitam/
daśāṣṭādaśabhedasya sārametatprakīrtitam//33//
puṣpe gandhastile tailaṃ dehe jīvo jale'mṛtam/
yathā tathaiva śāstrāṇāṃ kulamantaḥ pratiṣṭhitam//34//

[42] *TĀ* 35.35a-35b:
tadeka evāgamo'yaṃ citraścitri'dhikāriṇi/
tathaiva sā prasiddhirhi svayūthyaparayūthyagā//35//
Halbfass notes that for AG, adhikāra refers to spiritual capacity, independent of caste: *India and Europe*, p. 561, n. 34. For more on this notion see also Halbfass, *Tradition and Reflection*, p. 73; Brooks, "Canon," p. 625, n. 67.

[43] *TĀ* 35.36a-36b:
sāṃkhyaṃ yogaṃ pāñcarātraṃ vedāṃścaiva na nindayet/
yataḥ śivodbhavāḥ sarva iti svacchandaśāsane//36//

(37a-37b)

And out from the one revelation those parts of parts are extracted away [as] traditions in the world. And by them people wander bewildered.[44]

(38a-40a)

But with respect to the side of more than one revelation, [certainty] is described as divided into objects [and] certainly it abides as higher and lower, for the purpose of fulfilling being valid. Otherwise, it is certain that validity would indeed not hold for any one. Permanence, noncontradiction, thus, [are] not the causes of measure; with respect to this side, authoritativeness of such a one precisely would be; from what is said, [it is] so.[45]

(40b-42a)

In a different manner, with respect to distinction, to the imagined, to the untruth, to the praising, the extreme-consequence (*atiprasaṅga*)[46] is a contradicting ["driving away"] of all revelation. To be understood necessarily thus is the measure with respect to this whose name is

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[44] *TĀ* 35.37a-37b:
ekasmādāgamāccaite khaṇḍakhaṇḍā vyapoddhṛtāḥ/
loke syurāgamāstaiśca jano bhrāmyati bhohitaḥ//37//
See also Pandey, *Abhinavgupta*, p. 551, referencing this verse.

[45] *TĀ* 35.38a-40a:
anekāgamapakṣe'pi vācyā viṣayabheditā/
avaśyamūrdhvādharatāsthityā prāmāṇyasiddhaye//38//
anyathā naiva kasyāpi prāmāṇyaṃ siddhyati dhruvam/
nityatvamavisaṃvāda iti no mānakāraṇam//39//
asminnaṃśe'pyamuṣyaiva prāmāṇyaṃ syāttathoditeḥ/
The exact meaning of this verse is difficult to discern. See also my summary of this verse in the body of this chapter.

[46] Potter, *Presuppositions of India's Philosophies*, p. 87, writes: "A description is *atiprasaṅga* when it applies to too much. . . ."

"Revealed Tradition" (*āgama*). Precisely to be understood is this looking into the position of religious treatises.[47]

(42b-43a)

Just as effort extended toward the most essential limb truly possesses fruit, in that way one should extend effort toward this [system], incited by Śambhu.[48]

(43b-44a)

And throughout the sacred treatises indeed the Great Lord has said that the subject who is qualified to study in such [a tradition] the subject qualified to study is difficult to find.[49]

(44b)

In this way, the Fusion of the Scriptures was described to me by the Venerable Śambhunātha.[50]

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[47] *TĀ* 35.40b-42a:
anyathāvyākṛtau kḷptāvasatyatve prarocane//40//
atiprasaṅgaḥ sarvasyāpyāgamasyāpabādhakaḥ/
avaśyopetya ityasminmāna āgamanāmani//41//
avaśyopetyamevaitacchāstraniṣṭhānirūpaṇam/
This verse also is difficult to translate; again see my summary of this verse in the body of the text.
[48] *TĀ* 35.42b-43a:
pradhāne'ṅge kṛto yatnaḥ phalavānvastuto yataḥ//42//
ato'smin yatnavān ko'pi bhavecchaṃbhupracoditaḥ/
[49] *TĀ* 35.43b-44a:
tatra tatra ca śāstreṣu nyarūpyata maheśinā//43//
etāvatyadhikārī yaḥ sa durlabha iti sphuṭam/
[50] *TĀ* 35.44b:
itthaṃ śrīśambhunāthena mamoktaṃ śāstramelenam//44//

Chapter VI
Conclusion

Consciousness, Language, and Reality as Erotic

Abhinavagupta's use of overtly sexual terminology underlies his view of Consciousness, Language, and Reality as primarily "erotic." In using the term "erotic" here, I have been greatly inspired and influenced by the discussions of Natalia Isayeva and David Michael Levin; and the specific charactistics that I want to indicate with the use of this term springs off directly from their profound insights.[1] In particular, Isayeva focuses on the revealing and concealing dynamics of AG's language, which she sees as charging it with an erotic tension; she has also noted the connection between *vimarśa* and the heart and its erotic energies.[2] Levin's observations arise in the context of elucidating the concept of "intertwining," the notion conceived by Merleau-Ponty to interpret the nondual aspect of subject and object in certain experiences. Nonetheless Levin's insights are quite relevant to AG's vision of consciousness. Levin argues that both creative

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[1] Isayeva, *From Early Vedanta to Kashmir Shaivism* (relevant insights in general may be found throughout the whole work; she explicitly addresses the erotic aspects of AG's worldview especially on pp. 182-186; her remarks on *dhvani* on pp. 165 ff. are also relevant); and Levin, *Opening of Vision*, pp. 212-232.

[2] See Isayeva, *From Early Vedanta to Kashmir Shaivism*, p. 138; note that she references Dyczkowski, *Stanzas*, p. 38; see also *Stanzas*, p. 45.

vision and poetic language contain an "erotic" dimension. Levin states that creative vision:

> makes connections, it gathers and unifies, it joins, it creates, it reproduces and multiplies; it is, in a word, erotic. Vision, being inherently metaphorical, responds primordially to things with a gaze very different from the literal gaze of the scientific eye.[3]

Levin also states that poetic language always "bespeaks its groundedness in the dynamism, the inherent creativity, of experience."[4] In other words, the dynamism and creativity of authentic experience will naturally transfer to the language that properly represents it.

I will be more systematic now and describe certain characteristics of consciousness and language that make Isayeva, Levin, and others refer to them (when understood from a certain point of view) as "erotic." I will then show how these characteristics are applicable to AG's vision of reality, particularly as expressed in his notion of reflexive awareness.

(1) Reflexive Awareness as Vitality and Primordial Resounding, Charged with Erotic Tension

Noting the erotic connotations of the energy of the word (*vāc-śakti*) as envisioned by Abhinavagupta and others, Isayeva describes language as being charged with erotic tension. She writes:

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[3] Levin, *Opening of Vision*, p. 227.

> [T]he very element of language was always regarded as a highly erotic medium. . . . The medium supporting the relationship between the artist and the spectator, the poet (*kavi*) and the "same-hearted" listener (*sahṛdaya*), is initially charged with erotic tension; by its very nature it is basically the same element and the same medium that brings together the lover and the beloved. The agents engaged in the relationship are themselves unimportant, it is the vibrating charge of love and mutual recognition, equally ripping them open for one another, that really counts. For Gauḍapāda and Bhartṛhari, the separate elements in the structure of the world are irrelevant and interchangeable, it is the pulsating interplay between them that bears all the significance. And for the Śaivite Tāntrika adept Abhinavagupta, the synchronized reverberation of *prakāśa* ("pure light of consciousness") and *vimarśa* ("dynamic self-reflection") is already tentatively presented as erotic union.[5]

According to Isayeva the erotic tension that charges the relationship between two lovers is the very element allowing language to be suggestive and revealing, to offer meaning.[6]

Levin also notes that language and vision are charged with an erotic tension in their playful and poetic aspects linking them, again, to the lover-beloved relationship:

> Eros is the sprit of communication, relationship and love; it is also the spirit of play, and the poetry in vision. Eros is the spirit which symbolically inhabits the intertwining.[7]

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[4] Levin, *Opening of Vision*, p. 231.
[5] Isayeva, *From Early Vedanta to Kashmir Shaivism*, pp. 183-4.
[6] Isayeva, *From Early Vedanta to Kashmir Shaivism*, pp. 183-4.
[7] Levin, *Opening of Vision*, p. 227.

For Levin, modes of language and vision that arise out of nondual experience and are able to reflect such experience are necessarily charged by erotic tension. Again, language contains an inherent impulse to relate, to bring together, to synthesize. This is the sense of Isayeva's description of the erotic tension underlying language as the vibration of "love and mutual recognition." Language is not neutral; it is imbued with the power to lead one toward recognizing the other as in relationship with oneself. Poetic language or authentic dialogue gives rise to embracing the other as no longer object and indeed as no longer other.[8]

AG also understood language as charged and as such able to lead to nondual experiences. In particular, AG, in *TĀ* 4 in his exposition of Mantra, the employment of which is essential to the tantric *sādhanā*, explicitly states that Mantra possesses Reflexive Awareness in the form of Vitality.

On one level, from the perspective of AG's hermeneutics of consciousness, Mantra is ultimately understood as Consciousness itself, the very source of language. As such mantra may be used as a tool in the context of ritual. When empowered by being infused with the vitality of the cosnciousness of guru, Mantra, now a manifestation of Pure

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[8] On these ideas, again see Isayeva, *From Early Vedanta to Kashmir Shaivism*, pp. 183-4.

Consciousness, is able to lead the practitioner to the nondual experience of Recognition or Recollection.[9] Thus, for AG special forms of language may be empowered by Consciousness and hence able to lead to liberating experiences of Consciousness.

On another level, vitality takes us back to the early tantric context. In *TĀ* 29 it is revealed that vitality in fact is AG's overcoding of the vital essence which is semen. At the beginning of the chapter, vitality is identified as Kula; this is further identified as the very emission of the Lord, who, as Muller-Ortega puts it, "blissfully and unstintingly discharges it [the Kula] from within himself.[10] And as both AG and JR make it clear, as Silburn, Sanderson, Flood, White, and others have shown, the vitality is reflected on the human level, appearing in particular as the male sexual fluid. Important for us is that the concrete imagery of sexuality and sexual fluids of the Kaula practices, reflecting the flowing of liquid bliss, that is the transmission and transfusion of sexual fluid from one "mouth" to another, charges AG's understanding of consciousness, language and reality. AG

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[9] See my discussion of vitality with reference to *TĀ* 4.181b-193b in my third chapter; see also Muller-Ortega, *Triadic Heart*, pp. 82-83. On p. 83 (at n. 9), Muller-Ortega offers the following description: "These [*OṂ, AHAM, SAUḤ*] and other *mantra*-s, when properly empowered (*mantra-vīrya*) by the awakened life-force (*prāṇa*) of the *guru*, and properly employed by the receptive disciple, engage the centripetal motion of the Heart."
[10] Muller-Ortega, *Triadic Heart*, p. 101, commenting on *TĀ* 29.4.

and his tradition in fact envisioned Supreme Consciousness, equated further with the Primordial Word and Ultimate Being, as similarly continually gushing forth and overflowing in bliss. In a word, consciousness and language for AG and his tradition is "spermatic," or more precisely, language and words are filled with seminal power, able to burst forth and generate meaning.

Vitality as Primordial Resounding

This is supported further by AG's identification of reflexive awareness, specifically as understood as vitality, with the aesthetic notion of Primordial Resounding (*dhvani*).

I will first show how AG made these identifications and then I will discuss the meaning of this notion in the context of aesthetics.

In his discussion of the secret ritual, AG speaks of the immersion into the threefold emission, or threefold Reflexive Awareness. He then says that what emerges is the vitality of the mantra, understood here as precisely Primordial Resounding.

> Thus, what rises toward the abode of union at the time of immersion in the threefold reflexive awareness (*vimarśa*), whose self is the reflexive awareness (*parimarśa*) of consciousness, the resonating, that precisely here would be the vitality of mantra. If the one who wishes

to obtain right there such emergent fruit continually unifies his own mantra always, [then] he knows indeed the emerging of the mantra.[11]

Elsewhere in Abhinavagupta's hermeneutics of consciousness, Primordial Resounding is the sound of one's own Reflexive Awareness; it is again equated with Mantra and Consciousness, and described as the pulsation of one's very own Heart which is Consciousness.[12]

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[11] *TĀ* 29.147b-149a:
evaṃ trividhavimarśāveśasamāpattidhāmni ya udeti//147//
saṃvitparimarśātmā dhvanistadeveha mantravīryaṃ syāt/
tatraivoditatādṛśaphalalābhasamutsukaḥ svakaṃ mantram//148//
anusandhāya sadā cedāste mantrodayaṃ sa vai vetti/

[12] Dyczkowski, *Doctrine*, p. 193 (at n.160).

[13] *Bhāvopahāra*, 33: translated in Enrica Garzilli, *The* Bhāvopahāra *of Cakrapāṇinātha: A Sanskrit Hymn to Śiva (11th-12th Century A.D.)* (Napoli: Istituto Universitario Orientale, 1992), pp. 53-54. I have slightly modified Garzilli's excellent translation only to emphasize terms relevant to my thesis.

[14] Edwin Gerow, "The *Dhvani* School of Criticism," in *The Literatures of India: An Introduction*, ed. Edward C. Dimcock, Jr., et. al. (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1974), p. 137.

[15] Garzilli, Bhāvopahāra, pp. 53-54, n. 149.

[16] Gerow, "Dhvani School," p. 137.

[17] *TĀ* 4.181b-182a:
parāmarśasvabhāvatvādetasyā yaḥ svayaṃ dhvaniḥ//181//
sadoditaḥ sa evoktaḥ paramaṃ hṛdayaṃ mahat/

[18] Muller-Ortega, *Triadic Heart*, p. 120.

[19] Isayeva, *From Early Vedanta to Kashmir Shaivism*, p. 167.

AG's followers continued attributing significance to this term even outside of aesthetics. For example, in Madhurāja's description of AG as having attained the highest consciousness, AG is depicted as striking the lute and causing it to hum with the Primordial Resounding. And also Cakrapāṇinātha, also in the line of AG, praises Śiva-Consciousness in his own hermeneutics of interiority as follows:

> The Primordial Resounding (*dhvani*) of Mantra-Consciousness is struck through the Loud Drum (*āḍambara*) and the Frenzied Dance (*tāṇḍava*) for the immersion into Liquid Bliss (*rasa*), the Blessed Being-Stuff (*bhavadbhāva*); how can I resound internally [merely] through acts that produce external results?[13]

For AG and others following in his stream, as this passage reveals, the Primordial Resounding, is equated with both vitality and the Highest Consciousness.

It is also associated with and becomes accessible through *rasa*, which I have translated here as "Liquid Bliss," another aesthetic notion which I will say more about below. For now, I note that both terms are rooted in and essential to classical Indian theories of aesthetics. The importance of each of these terms is reflected in the fact that each term was associated with a particular school of thought. Important for us is that in the thought of AG, the Rasa school and the Dhvani school merged together. One of the

implications of this merging was that for AG the meanings of *dhvani* and *rasa* became linked. In terms of his poetics, on one hand *dhvani* is sometimes described as the translation of *rasa* into the terms of poetry[14]

Sometimes Primordial Resounding is described as the essence of aesthetic experience, while Liquid Bliss is the state of consciousness which is the fruit of the aesthetic moment, i.e., the aesthetic experience itself;[15] in other words Primordial Resounding might be thought of as the way in which the goal, Liquid Bliss, is conveyed.

Also, Primordial Evoking is often referred to as a power or energy (*śakti*), where such power is experienced through Liquid Bliss. As this power, Primordial Evoking manifests through Liquid Bliss or as Liquid Bliss. In some ways then the two terms are in fact equated. The primordial evoking is evocative power, or the meaning "hidden" in the text ready to burst forth, and the liquid bliss is the thing that is to be evoked, or again the meaning. So in this way the two terms are linked or even identified with each other.[16]

Now most important for our understanding of reflexive awareness is that in the context of expounding the tantric texts, AG ties Primordial Resounding back to the Kula/Kaula context, specifically linking Primordial

Resounding to the Heart and its energies. He describes Supreme Consciousness as being endowed with Primordial Resounding precisely because the nature of Consciousness is Reflexive Awareness. Resounding is further described as continually arising and equated with the Great Heart.

> Because its own-nature is reflexive awareness (*parāmarśa*), it [Supreme Consciousness, or more specifically, Supreme Consciousness in the form of Mantra] is endowed with a primordial spontaneous sounding (*dhvani*), continually arising, which is called the "Supreme Great Heart" (*hṛdaya*).[17]

Muller-Ortega insightfully interprets this resounding as the "internal resonance, the primordial hum that is set up by this movement (the internal dynamism, the perpetual movement toward itself) within the Ultimate Reality."[18]

The link to Reflexive Awareness, Mantra, and the Heart, must also be understood in relation to the important connection I noted above, i.e., its identification with the vitality of mantra. This is a crucial relationship as it reminds us that for AG consciousness and language are charged with an erotic tension; such an idea is rooted again in the early Tantra context.

This allows to see some relationships between AG's use of terms in two different contexts, that of aesthetics and that of Tantra. I would

suggest that the aesthetic nuances of these terms flavor AG's use of the same terms in the context of Tantra.

In the context of Tantra, AG says that Mantra-Consciousness, the source of all words and meanings and objects, is charged with vitality (*vīrya*). In the context of Aesthetics, AG refers to texts as overflowing with the Primordial Resounding, i.e., evocative suggestion (*dhvani*). The implication of both statements is that language is charged. From the perspective of AG's own hermeneutics of consciousness, an interpretation as we have seen that emphasizes consciousness and meaning over external forms, AG's expression of language as vital refers to the power of language and the fact that language overflows with meaning. The equation of *vīrya* and *dhvani* thus suggests that AG's Tantra and Aesthetics clearly inform one another. Returning now to my original line of discussion: AG understands Reflexive Awareness not only as Vitality but also as Primordial Resounding. Thus, although Vitality and Primordial Resounding appear unrelated, there is a precise relationship. In the context of aesthetics, AG states that a text that overflows with Primordial Resounding (*dhvani*) is a text that leads to the blissful experience of the relishing of Liquid Bliss, an experience of nonduality. Primordial

Resounding is at once both power and meaning. It is the power of a text to evoke, while at the same time it is what is being evoked, the meaning in other words. Isayeva brings these two senses together when she describes Primordial Resounding as the "passionate longing of language to reveal something about the universe that only language can know."[19] The universe becomes most meaningful through language that has the most evocative power, that overflows with the most meaning. Whether AG says that Language has Vitality or that it is imbued with Primordial Resounding, the sense is the same. Language is filled with vitality or seminal power waiting to burst forth when it touches the right heart and reveals meaning.

(2) Reflexive Awareness as Making Connections

Both Levin and Isayeva note the erotic characteristic of language and vision when it connects and contacts. It opens up the listener to see connections previously unnoticed, to make connections between various levels and dimensions of reality, and in particular between oneself and what was previously seen as other.

Again this characteristic is essential to AG's worldview; further, and most importantly, it connects AG's worldview back to the tantric context again.

Now it should be noted that even outside of Tantra, Reflexive Awareness has this sense. As I have noted earlier, David Lawrence has been pointed out that Reflexive Awareness is linguistically and conceptually related in the context of Recognition philosophy to various terms denoting synthesis, association, and connection (*anusaṃdhāna* and related terms) through the medium of language.[20] Raffaele Torella adds that awareness unifies and joins things together, making connections and penetrating them with its own creativity and dynamism.[21]

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[20] Lawrence, *Rediscovering God*, p. 87.
[21] Torella, IPK, p. 178, n. 11.
[22] Levin, *Opening of Vision*, p. 214.
[23] See Dyczkowski's exposition in *Aphorisms*, p. 61.
[24] *VBh* 69-73: see Singh's discussion in *Yoga of Delight*, p. 69; see also Padoux, *Vāc*, p. 290, referring to JR's citation of VBh 73.
[25] See Flood, *Body and Cosmology*, p. 232.
[26] See *TĀ* 29.159-160. See also Silburn's translation and exposition in *Kuṇḍalini*, pp. 201-202 and 205.
[27] See Flood, *Body and Cosmology*, p. 214 for example.
[28] See Geoffrey Parrinder, "Touching," in *The Encyclopedia of Religion*, vol. 14, pp. 578-83 on the cross-religious significance of "touching;" on p. 579 he briefly expounds on the two examples given here.
[29] Again see *VBh* 69-73 and exposition by Singh in *Yoga of Delight*, p. 69.
[30] Here I am following the insights of Turner found in *Beauty*, pp. 66 and 113ff.
[31] See Pandey, *Abhinavagupta*, p. 616.
[32] See Diana L. Eck, *Darśan: Seeing the Divine in India*, 3d edition (New York, Columbia University Press, 1998), p. 9

AG will give these same notions a tantric spin. For AG, the greatest connection that can be made is the connection back to the source, the primordial connection; this in fact includes making connections between all things and seeing those things as also related to the matrix. In particular, as it has been seen in my discussion of immersion in Reflexive Awareness (*TĀ* 29.147b-149a), awareness for AG is an act of connecting back to Consciousness, the source of all language and mantric energy. And this act in turn involves the gathering together of all the various energies and linking them back to their source. This then for AG is the final Recognition of God, the Revelation of Śiva-Bhairava, equated with Primordial Speech. Thus for AG again it is precisely through the energies or manifestations of Consciousness or Word, that one returns back.

Interestingly, the revelation of Being has been described in another context by Levin, highlighting the primordial potential of creative language and vision, experienced in the body as an ecstatic experience of transacting in visionary energies:

> By reconnecting us to the unifying unity of the primordial field, it helps us to see our bodily felt 'centre of ecstasy' and makes of our vision, our visionary 'transactions', a hermeneutical disclosing--a *homologein*--of the primordial ecstasy of Being, seen ontologically, as presencing in the opening-up of a (self-differentiating) field of sheer lucency.[22]

AG similarly understood revelation in terms of creative vision and language. In particular, language in the form of *mantra* is understood as being continually emitted and resorbed by Consciousness, sometimes called the Creative Sonic Matrix, in the form of energy.[23] The energies retain their link to Consciousness, a link referred to as "Vitality," and such connection may be used by the practitioner to journey back to the source. Recognition then is an act of gathering together all the energies that have been emitted, seeing them as unified in one source. In particular it is the recognition that all energies are in fact manifestations of Consciousness, identified with one's deepest Self. The practitioner recollects that one's self is in fact the center of all energies.

So far this process has been described in abstract terms, as AG's hermeneutics of consciousness would do so and as Levin's interpretation of the vision of Being would do so.

However, AG's use of tantric terminology (Creative Sonic Matrix, Vitality, Energy, and so on) signals that the process of recognition is interpreted by AG in terms of the process of linking with energies in the early tantric context. In other words AG retains the ecstatic vision of early Tantra in his understanding of this process of Recognition, continuing the

embodied process of transacting in energies, attracting all energies, the sky-going *yoginīs*, and becoming their new center, the new Lord.

(3) Reflexive Awareness as Touching, Making Contact

Reflexive Awareness is also a type of touching or making contact. This is the primordial meaning of the term that AG always retained. This is seen by the special importance AG gave to the sense of touch. At the same time this is not to say that the other senses were unimportant. In fact, all the senses were important for AG and his tradition. Thus the *VBh* recommends that the yogin meditate on the joy derived from all kinds of sensations, touching in sexual intercourse, seeing a friend, eating a delicious meal, and hearing a beautiful song.[24] Further, in discussing the secret ritual AG continues an essential notion of Tantra: practice is always embodied; one attains identity with Bhairava through the body (*kāya*), speech (*vāc*), and mind (*manas*).[25] Finally, ritual for AG was interpreted not only through the registers of light and sound but also through that of touch.[26] Touching was an essential sense for AG. And in fact touching was the most important sense for AG. The sense of touch is important for AG precisely because of its association with sexual intercourse and the body.

It should be noted that the positive valence that touching possessed for AG was consistent with the Hindu worldview. Thus, for example, both within and beyond AG's own tradition, one may embody the divine, become touched by the divine, through the technique of *nyāsa;* and one may become liberated simply through being touched by the guru.[27]

Silburn and Flood have noted that Indian culture regarded touching as the most important sense in sexual intercourse.[28] Perhaps this is simply common sense derived from a biological fact. Thus, when the *VBh* recommends pleasurable stimulation of the senses, as it has been seen sexual intercourse is listed as the primary example of the sense of touch.[29] And in fact Indian culture actually celebrates this most important sense, as Frederick Turner has pointed in in highlighting their highly developed arts of touching and sexual intercourse, and the corresponding complex theory on the capacity of the sense of touch, preserved for example in the *Treatise on Love* (*Kāmasūtra*).[30] I am reminded here that according to the *Treatise on Love* the "tantric consort" or "messenger" (*dūtī*)would be seen as the perfect lover.[31]

In the Vedic worldview, the sense of touching was used as a metaphor for knowing. This may be difficult to imagine in the 21st-century

where vision is the primary mode and where vision is unembodied. Although in the Vedic world vision was essential, it was no more essential than touching. Indeed, vision itself was a type of touching.[32] In other words, vision was always embodied. It may be recalled here that the vision of the seers was transmitted via the body, the texts of the seers were learned by heart only when they were felt in the body.[33] And this notion was continued by AG. One received the transmission of gnosis through the body; and only by embodying the tradition did one identify with Śiva-Bhairava.[34]

In chapter 5, I referred to Malamoud's description of touching (*āmarśana*) in Vedic ritual, where the *adhvaryu* and sacrificer make contact with each other through a "resonating hole" in order to make an alliance, i.e., effect a type of transformation. This suggested that *vimarśa* retains this sense of touching or resonating in AG's thought. *Vimarśa* is a type of charge, explained in terms of consciousness; the consciousness of the disciple resonates with the consciousness of the guru which in turn resonates with the consciousness of Śiva. Linking to the primordial past,

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[33] Malamoud, *Cooking the World*, p. 256.
[34] Flood, *Body and Cosmology*, pp. 281-301.
[35] *TĀ* 11.29-31: Flood, *Body and Cosmology*, p. 285.

entering the flow of the tradition, is possible then because of contact with the guru, a face to face encounter, touching the guru, and being touched by the flow of grace.

Again this interpretation is consistent with AG's hermeneutics of consciousnes. However, in addition for AG such contact with primordial consciousness has a physical basis: the process of linking back and joining the stream involves the physical sense of touching, that is sexual intercourse, so that the exchange of sexual fluids may be effected.

Thus, as Flood and Silburn note, touching was the most important sense for Abhinavagupta and his tradition. It was only touch, for example, neither seeing nor hearing nor the other senses, that was actually considered part of the highest tattva.[35] For AG, touch was considered helpful in achieving identity with Śiva-Bhairava.[36] Flood writes:

> [T]ouch is regarded as a sense of great importance in the context of a transformative practice. This is because touch has its roots at the top of the manifest cosmic body, though it does not exist in the condition of vibration (*spanda*), identified with Paramaśiva beyond manifestation. Touch at the physical level is a reflection of the 'touch' of the Śakti-tattva, and so can be a route back to that level. . . . The sense of touch emphasizes the body, and the exploration of the sense of touch in love-making becomes a reflection and means of achieving the level where touch originates.[37]

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[36] Dyczkowski, *Stanzas*, pp. 251-252.

[37] Flood, *Body and Cosmology*, p. 286.

The importance given to the sense of touch by AG emphasizes the importance of the body in general and the importance of sexual intercourse in particular, that is sexual intercourse as a means of receiving the transmission of gnosis and embodying the tradition. Thus for AG and JR the highest immersion (*samāveśa*), that of course occurs via orgasm, is described as a particular type of touching, the touching of penetration (*praveśasaṃsparśa*).[38]

(4) Reflexive Awareness as Emissional Energy and the Flowing of Liquid Bliss

For AG, Reflexive Awareness is also Emission (*visarga*). Śiva and Śakti are identified with Prakāśa and Vimarśa, with the phonemes *A* and *H*, with the Bindu and the Visarga. Thus Vimarśa as Śakti is always identified with the phoneme H, in turn identified with the Visarga.[39] This identification is made explicitly and sometimes implicitly in various places by AG, as well as by JR and KR.

At *TĀ* 3.71b-72a, AG identifies the energy of will with reflexive awareness. Here JR glosses energy of will as the primordial vibration

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[38] *TĀ* 29.114-115: see also Flood, *Body and Cosmology*, p. 289 for translation with comments on JR's commentary here.

[39] See White's discussion of these identifications in the context of Kāmakalā practice in "Transformations," especially p. 180.

which is God's urge to emit (*visisṛkṣā*). JR is consistent in his identification of *vimarśa* and *visarga*. In his commentary on AG's discussion of *visarga* at *TĀ* 3.135b-145b, JR now glosses *visarga* as the "reflexive awareness waiting for emission."[40] At *TĀ* 3.195b-197a, AG describes manifestation as the Unique Reflexive Awareness giving rise to fifty reflexive awarenesses, a process set in motion by God's freedom (*svācchandya*) and emissional power (*visargaśakti*). AG links Reflexive Awareness to emission at *TĀ* 3.200b-202a and 202b-206a. In the latter set of verses, Reflexive Awareness is the emissional power, overflowing, and identified with "I." At *TĀ* 29.121a-121b AG posits reflexive awareness as a characteristic of both the quiescent and emergent emissions. Finally also in *TĀ* 29 AG moves smoothly from a discussion of the threefold emission (*trividhavisarga*) at verses 140b-141a to a discussion of the threefold reflexive awareness (*trividhavimarśa*) at verses 147b-149a, implying that reflexive awareness is to be identified with emission. JR in fact supports this reading, glossing *vimarśa* as *visarga* in his commentary on the latter discussion.

KR also continues this identification by AG. For example, in the *ŚSV*, KR relates a twofold emission to a twofold reflexive awareness:

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[40] Discussed by Padoux, in *Vāc*, pp. 278-279.

> [The] two *bindus* forming the *visarga* correspond to a double emission, inward and outward, resulting from two self-awarnesses, one internal (*antarvimarśa*) revealing the universe as resting in the absolute, the other external (*bahirvimarśa*), producing the five groups of consonants . . . and the *tattvas*. . . .[41]

KR's commentary is important for another reason; it again highlights the fact that one of the intended referents of *visarga* in AG's discussion is the final phoneme of the Sanskrit alphabet, consisting of two drops or points (*bindu*).

This referent becomes important in the *Play of the Power of Love* (*Kāmakalāvilāsa*). This text of the Auspicious Wisdom (*śrīvidyā*) tradition that arose in Kashmir in the twelfth to thirteenth centuries,[42] captures the dynamics of the erotic union of Śiva and Śakti while interpreting such union in terms of wisdom or gnosis.

Dyczkowski has described this process as follows.[43] Here Śiva and Śakti are the subject pole and object pole of Consciousness, also referred to as the transcendental ground and the manifest universe. In general, they are represented by a white drop (*śuklabindu*) and red drop (*śoṇitabindu*) respectively. These drops contain the essence of Infinite Consciousness and

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[41] *ŚSV* 2.7, p. 62: translated by Padoux in *Vāc*, p. 280.
[42] White, "Transformations," p. 176.

are in a state of continual throbbing pulsation, described further in terms of expanding and contracting, or penetrating and withdrawing.

This scheme is complicated by the fact that in this dynamic process both Śiva and Śakti are continually transformed.[44] Thus, in one phase of the process White Śiva is described as penetrating Red Śakti; as a result there is the emission of the universe. The White Śiva that penetrates is transformed into White Śakti, while the Red Śakti that receives the penetration becomes Red Śiva. In the next phase, Red Śiva, now the new subject pole of Consciousness, and the Ground of Being, penetrates White Śakti, now the object pole of Consciousness, and the emitted totality. This is also described in terms of a White Śiva that withdraws from Red Śakti. In this phase of the process the transcendent pole of Consciousness is dominant and the universe is resorbed. Now White Śakti is transformed back into White Śiva, and Red Śiva is transformed back into Red Śakti. White Śakti merging back into White Śiva is also described as the awareness Śiva has of Himself, as pure consciousness, as the transcendental "I." There a continual exchange of roles. Becoming manifest means that the

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[43] My account of this process in this and the next two paragraphs is a direct summary of Dyczkowski's account found in *Doctrine*, pp. 102-103, and notes. Dyczkowski refers to *KKV*, pp. 153, and 156-158; and verses 5, 25, and 50.
[44] Dyczkowski, Doctrine, pp. 102-3.

other becomes the new transcendental ground of the other. There is no fixed role for either pole. Red and White, Śiva and Śakti, Transcendence and Immanence implicate one another. The whole process may be summarized in the following table:

Emissional Phase
White Śiva penetrates Red Śakti
At the same time: Red Śiva withdraws from White Śakti
The result is: Emission; and White Śiva becomes White Śakti; Red Śakti becomes Red Śiva

Resorption Phase
Red Śiva penetrates White Śakti
At the same time: White Śiva withdraws from Red Śakti
The result is: Resorption; and Red Śiva becomes Red Śakti; White Śakti becomes White Śiva

The two drops here, Dyczkowski observes, make up the *visarga*, the natural form (*svarūpa*) of the Lady Love (*Kāmeśvarī*), identified as the energy of Reflexive Awareness, by means of which there is the continual emission and resorption and continual mutual transformation of Śiva and Śakti as described above.[45] She is also called Lunar Digit or Sixteenth Portion (*kalā*).[46] Her lover is none other than Lord Love (*kāmeśvara*), evoked when the transcendental nondual aspect of the Godhead is emphasized. Dyczkowski notes here that Śiva and Śakti in nondual union are

[45] Dyczkowski, *Doctrine*, pp. 102-3.

symbolized by the "drop of mingling" (*miśrabindu*), represented by the Sanskrit *bindu*, described as pure potential, ready to shoot forth like a fertilized swollen (*ucchūna*) seed. Lord Love then is the erotic union of Śiva and Śakti having taken one body (*piṇḍa*).

The Flowing of Bliss: Godhead's Emission, Orgasm, Aesthetic Experience

Emissional Energy links back to the multivalent term *rasa*, that I have been translating as "liquid bliss," which evokes the tantric senses of the term. It is used in a variety of places in fact. In the context of aesthetics it is "aesthetical passion."[47] It is also "essence," and is frequently applied to the Godhead. Thus it is found in Utpaladeva's poetic work on devotion, where Śivarasa refers to the very stuff of the Godhead, through which Śiva and Śakti (and the whole universe) become manifest.[48]

Most importantly, the multivalent nature of *rasa* and its importance for AG is seen most clearly in its connection to the emissional energy. Emissional energy itself has referents on many levels, including, most importantly, its identify with reflexive awareness.

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[46] White, "Transformations," p. 176.

[47] Isayeva, *From Early Vedanta to Kashmir Shaivism*, p. 171.

AG connects *rasa* and emissional energy when he writes:

> The Emissional Energy of Śambhu thus abides in all places. From that [arises] the ensemble of the thundering of the liquid bliss (*rasa*) of joy. So indeed, when a sweet [song] is sung, or in touching, or in [smelling] sandalwood and so on, [and] when the state of standing in the middle ceases [when the ordinary state ceases], that is the state of vibrating in the heart, that is called precisely the "energy of bliss," because of which a human being is with-heart.[49]

On one hand it is seen that liquid bliss may be understood as a manifestation of emissional energy. Here I should note this connection has a Vedic precedent; already the cosmic emission of Prajāpati was understood as being reflected on the human level in the ejaculation of semen during sexual intercourse, where semen is referred to as *rasa*, precisely because it is the "essence" or "sap" of life itself.[50]

Further, as Padoux has clearly observed, AG indicates here that emissional energy itself has various referents. Padoux explains that for AG the Emissional Energy of Śambhu vibrates everywhere; not only as sexual

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[48] Constantina Rhodes Bailly, *Shaiva Devotional Songs of Kashmir: A Translation and Study of Utpaladeva's* Shivastotravali (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1987), p. 9.
[49] *TĀ* 3.208b-210b:
visargaśaktiryā śambhoḥ setthaṃ sarvatra vartate//208//
tata eva samasto 'yamānandarasavibhramaḥ/
tathāhi madhure gīte sparśe vā candanādike//209//
mādhyasthyavigame yāsau hṛdaye spandamānatā/
ānandaśaktiḥ saivoktā yataḥ sahṛdayo janaḥ//210//
See also Muller-Ortega, *Triadic Heart*, p. 136; and Padoux, *Vāc*, pp. 289-290.
[50] Brian K. Smith, *Reflections on Resemblence, Ritual and Religion* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1989), p. 83.

emission, but in anything that moves us, that stirs us to experience bliss, whether aesthetic or religious.[1]

The connection between aesthetic experience and religious experience has also been noted by Donna Wulff. She observes that in both aesthetic and religious experience, there is identification with a higher Consciousness that takes one out of oneself. On one hand, the aesthetically sensitive person (*sahṛdaya*), precisely through the shaking up of energy, in particular the stirring up of a particular emotion (*sthāyibhāva*), goes out of themselves and attains identity (*tanmayībhavana*) with the consciousness being represented (*taccittavṛtti*) by a drama or poem.[2] On the other hand, *tanmayībhavana* is the same term AG uses to refer to identification, or "consubstantiation" with Śiva.[3]

Again the human plane is always a reflection of the divine plane, as Padoux has clearly articulated;[4] Padoux notes further that the vibration, the throbbing, the freedom of God may be experienced by conscious beings and used as a means to return to God. Vibration is experienced in intense sensual

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[1] The rest of this paragraph is a summary of Padoux, *Vāc*, pp. 289-290.
[2] See Wulff, "Religion in a New Mode: The Convergence of the Aesthetic and the Religious in Medieval India," *Journal of the American Academy of Religion* 54, no. 4 (Winter 1986): pp. 676-677.
[3] *TĀ* 4.209: Wulff, "Religion in a New Mode," p. 677, n. 11, with reference to Masson and Patwardhan, *Śāntarasa*. "Consubstantiation" is Sanderson's term: Sanderson, "Meaning," p. 76.
[4] Here and in what follows, I am following and partially summarizing Padoux's exposition of *visarga*, in *Vāc*, pp. 289 ff.

or sexual pleasure, or in any highly aroused emotional state. Thus the *VBh* recommends that the yogin meditate on the joy derived from all kinds of sensations, touching in sexual intercourse, seeing a friend, eating a delicious meal, hearing a beautiful song.[5] The intensity of the experience is understood as the stirring up of one's energy, the opening of one's consciousness, moving into a state of "synchronized reverberation" with Universal Vibration, identity with Consciousness. Utpaledeva thus says that one's heart beats with the heart of God, one feels the pulsation of God's heart itself Liquid bliss then, like emissional energy, refers to the Godhead, to sexual emission, to aesthetic experience, and to religious experience.

The Śiva Stuff (*śivarasa*) and the Great Stuff (*mahārasa*)

The connection to emissional energy immediately links Liquid Bliss back to the tantric level.

The tantric connotations of liquid bliss are suggested in the "Verses on Meditation" (*dhyānaśloka*), where Madhurāja described his guru Abhinavagupta, while being accompanied by two female tantric-ritual partners, as bearing in his hand a vessel of the Juice of Śiva (*śivarasa*).

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[5] *VBh* 69-73: see Singh's discussion in *Yoga of Delight*, p. 69; see also Padoux, *Vāc*, p. 290, referring to JR's citation of *VBh* 73.

Abhinavagupta himself refers to *rasa* specifically as Śivarasa when he cites the *Brahmayāmalatantra* as saying that wine is the Juice of Śiva, without which one can obtain neither liberation nor any fruitions. There are three kinds of *rasa* that bestow fruitions; but the one that bestows liberation is the pure *rasa*, the supreme fire, made of light, bliss, and consciousness; the gods themselves love it, and is therefore worthy to be drunk.[6] Abhinavagupta makes this statement in the context of his discussion of the secret ritual. In this rite, *mahārasa*, the great stuff, refers to the mixture of the sexual fluids of a female tantric consort and her male partner. The male partner emits his seed into the womb of the female partner, where it mixes with her vital breath, and becomes transformed through her yogic energy into *mahārasa*. This is then transmitted back and forth between the male and female through the sexual organs referred to as "mouths."[7]

Such Liquid Bliss is also referred to as the Supreme Kula;[8] and elsewhere we are told that Kula is the potency, the power,[9] superiority,

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[6] *TĀ* 29.11a-13b: I am following Gnoli's translation in *LDSS*, pp. 681-682; Pandey expounds this in *Abhinavagupta*, p. 616.

[7] See White, *Alchemical Body*, p. 200, in reference to *TĀ* 29.126 and 129. White does not refer to *mahārasa* here; but it is clear that this is identical to *sadbhāva*, "the good stuff." On this latter term, see White, "Transformations," p. 190.

[8] See *TĀ* 29.127b-129a.

freedom, vitality, force, amassing, consciousness, and body of the Godhead;[10] again, as Utpaladeva already told us, it is the very stuff of Paramaśiva. Attaining the Kula is immersing oneself in the tradition, and penetrating the Body of Consciousness.[11] That is, eating the real stuff of Śiva is to join the stream of the tradition and to return back to Śiva.

Reflexive Awareness as Experiencing Bliss/Relishing Rasa

Elsewhere, AG explicitly states that the relishing of *rasa* and the experience of bliss is nothing less than Reflexive Awareness, recollecting God. In *TĀ* 29, AG describes Reflexive Awareness as consciousness opening outwards and overflowing towards various enjoyments:

> At the time of the intense reflexive awareness of one's own-form, [which is] an opening [of consciousness] towards each of one's own various enjoyments, one after the other the goddesses of the secondary wheels reach the center wheel of consciousness.[12]

Again, the context for AG's discussion is the secret tantric ritual. At the same time he clearly has in mind aesthetic notions, as evidenced by his use of the

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[9] The term used here is *sāmarthya*. This is derived from *samartha*, which refers to a "word that has force or meaning," or a "significant word;" thus *sāmarthya* is both "power" and "sameness of meaning or signification." See Monier-Williams, *Sanskrit-English Dictionary*, s.v.

[10] *TĀ* 29.4a-4b:
kulaṃ ca parameśasya śaktiḥ sāmarthyamūrdhvatā/
svātantryamojo vīryaṃ ca piṇḍaḥ saṃvicchaarīrakam//4//

[11] Flood, *Body and Cosmology*, p. 296.

[12] *TĀ*, 29.111b-112a:
nijanijabhogābhogapravikāsinijasvarūpaparimarśe//111//
kramaśo'nucakradevyaḥ saṃviccakraṃ hi madhyamaṃ yānti/

terms *rasa* and *vikāsa*. In experiencing joy, beauty, and bliss, what is termed the "relishing of *rasa*," there arises the symptom of the expansion, blooming out, radiance (*vikāsa*) of consciousness. Such radiance is related in particular to the enjoyment of the erotic, the state where all sensual pleasures come together and one's heart blooms out. Such expansion then is the after-glow of an aesthetic or erotic experience.[13] Thus, applying aesthetic ideas in the context of the secret tantric ritual, while discussing Reflexive Awareness, AG clearly wants to understand Reflexive Awareness as having both aesthetic and erotic connotations.

KR has understood Reflexive Awareness similarly, as an outpouring of consciousness; he also relates it to other aesthetic notions, Juice-Equilibrium (*sāmarasya*) and Creative Insight (*pratibhā*):

> The upsurge (of consciousness) is the sudden emergence of the highest level of intuition (*pratibhā*), the outpouring (*ucchalanā*) of consciousness consisting of the (ever) extending awareness (*vimarśa*) (it has of its own nature). It is Bhairava because He is full of the entire universe insofar as He is the unity (*sāmarasya*) of all His powers and assimilates into Himself every differentiated perception (*kalpana*). (He appears in this form) to those (yogis) who, devoted to Him, are solely intent on the inner reality (of all things), in order to make their own Bhairava-nature manifest.[14]

See also Silburn, *Kuṇḍalinī*, p. 195, n. 33; and Flood, *Body and Cosmology*, pp. 283 ff.

[13] See Ingalls, Dhvanyāloka, p. 118, n. 3. and p. 228, n. 15; and Pandey, *Abhinavagupta*, p. 621.

[14] KR's commentary on *ŚS* 1.5: translated by Dyczkowski in *Aphorisms*, p. 23.

The term *sāmarasya* literally means "the state of a balance of juices." David White notes that in later *haṭhayogic* works the term implies a state of "fluid equilibrium," "a condition in which the emanatory and resorptive impulses of the Absolute are balanced within the human microcosm." Further, he notes that for the Nāth Siddhas, it refers to a state of balance between the male and female drops, lunar and solar, seminal and sanguineous, Śiva and Śakti; this is the creation of a great drop (*mahābindu*), "a yogic zygote of sorts, from which the new, liberated, all-powerful, and immortal self of the *jīvanmukta* emerges."[15]

(5) Inciting Ecstasy, Bliss, and Wonder

Language also leads to experiencing existence as ecstatic. Levin has described this process of the "opening of vision:"

> [E]xistence is ecstatic . . . to be a human being, Dasein, is to stand out in the openness of Being . . . we are, in an ontological sense, centres of visionary ecstasy, and not egological subjects.[16]

Similarly, for AG, the Kaula ritual was to lead to "visionary ecstasy," the ultimate experience at the peak of this secret, where the individual went beyond ordinary existence as an egological subject, and opened themselves up to the energies of Being, embodying ecstasy. Thus, JR states that one becomes

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[15] White, *Alchemical Body*, p. 185.

a sky-goer, fusing with the *yoginīs*, by thinking, "I am not, and another is not, only as *śaktis* do I exist."[17]

In describing language as charged with erotic tension and in describing relationship as erotic, Isayeva refers to the pulsating interplay of Śiva and Śakti, the erotic union of Pure Light-Consciousness and Dynamic Primordial Recollecting.[18] The dynamism of God becomes reflected on the individual level as the impulse to unite with the other, the erotic impulse. Further, language incites this process of relationship, spurring the individual to go beyond themselves, to expand and open up towards the other in a never-ending process, continually confronting deeper levels and continually being ripped open.[19]

For AG, language reflected this erotic aspect of intertwining; this is revealed most clearly by the fact that he used language itself, in particular in the form of divine dialogue between Bhairava and His Consort, as a metaphor for their erotic union. In addition AG's conscious appropriation of the divine dialogue to interpret guru-disciple relationships, and to discuss the vitality of Mantra-Consciousness, the source of language, further reflects AG's

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16 Levin, *Opening of Vision*, p. 213.
17 See Masson and Patwardhan, *Śāntarasa*, pp. 40–41; and Flood, *Body and Cosmology*, p. 292.
18 See Isayeva, *From Early Vedanta to Kashmir Shaivism*, especially p. 144, n. 15 and pp. 185-6.
19 Isayeva, *From Early Vedanta to Kashmir Shaivism*, pp. 183-4.

awareness that all dialogue and all language possess the capacity to be erotic. In the intertwining of dialogue lies the power for the Self to recollect itself, for Being to return to itself.[20] Thus, as we have seen, the divine dialogue is also a conversation that God has with Itself.

The Joyful Astonishment of Recollection

Reflexive Awareness is also identified with *camatkāra*, the joyful astonishment of recollection, the state of overflowing with wonder and amazement.[21]

Gnoli notes that Astonishment is the essential condition of being alive, of being someone with heart (*sahṛdaya*), noting:

> [W]onder is present, in a broader sense, in every form of life, it is like consciousness itself, the element which distinguishes consciousness or spirit from inanimate matter."[22]

For AG, following Utpalaeva, without astonishment there would be no consciousness; in fact for AG astonishment was identical with reflexive awareness.[23]

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[20] Of relevance here is Levin, *Opening of Vision*, pp. 198-9.

[21] "Astonishment" literally means "the thundering out of." On *camatkāra* see also Torella, IPK, pp. 118-9, n. 23; Singh, *Trident of Wisdom*, pp. 112 and 116; Alper, "*Svabhāvam*", p. 46, n. 59; KR, *PHṛ*, verse 20: translated in Singh, *Doctrine of Recognition*, p. 91. Finally, David White points out that in later medieval and modern parlance, an approximate meaning for the term is "proof of supernatural power," or "miracle." (Personal communication.)

[22] Gnoli, *Aesthetic Experience*, p. XLVII.

[23] I discuss this below.

Gnoli further describes astonishment as the experience of being shocked out of one's ordinary condition in the presence of the beautiful or the sacred, thus linking together the religious and the aesthetic. Gnoli states that it refers to the experience of breaking through the cracks in reality to the other side; as the former reality breaks down, one stands helplessly in awe as another reality gushes through.[24]

Astonishment is also identified with Bliss *(ānanda)*.[25] It also refers to the vibrational aspect of consciousness, a sense emphasized by Abhinavagupta in his Recognition work.[26]

Isayeva captures these various connotations in her glosses of *camatkāra* as the "wondrous vibration of pleasure," "the vibrating joy that accompanies aesthetical pleasure" or "joyous amazement of recognition."[27] Wonder also implies nondual awareness. Thus Sanderson glosses the term as "an act of undifferentiated subjective experience."[28] Finally, Padoux puts this sense of nonduality and the various other senses together in his description of *camatkāra*:

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[24] Gnoli, *LDSS*, p. 17.
[25] J. L. Masson and M. V. Patwardhan, *Aesthetic Rapture: The* Rasādhyāya *of the* Nāṭyaśāstra, 2 vols. (Poona: Deccan College, Postgraduate and Research Institute, 1970), vol. I, p. 18: cited in Wulff, "Religion in a New Mode," pp. 678-679.
[26] See below.
[27] Isayeva, *From Early Vedanta to Kashmir Shaivism*, pp. 171 and 173.

> [*Camatkāra* is] wonder, thrill of joy, wonderment, and ecstatic rapture, experienced by consciousness at its self-revelation and its self-awareness, or when contemplating the manifestation that it holds within itself.[29]

Astonishment in Recognition

The term and its cognate *camatkṛti* had already been used by Utpaladeva in his *IPK*.[30] Important for us is its identification with Reflexive Awareness by Utpaladeva and later Abhinavagupta. For Utpaladeva, the term is understood as Reflexive Awareness enriched with strong aesthetic connotations.[31] And for AG, commenting on the *IPK*, it is described as Reflexive Awareness that pulsates as an inner vibration of consciousness.[32] It may partly be described as the wonder experienced by consciousness turning back to its primordial state.[33] And elsewhere, also commenting on the *IPK*, linking word and silence together, or speech and inner experience, AG writes:

> Representation (*pratyavamarśa*) is a verbalising (*śabdana*) that is a (purely) internal enunciation or expression (*antarabhilāpa*). . . . It is an act of undifferentiated subjective experience (*camatkāra*) comparable to an internal nod of the head. . . .[34]

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[28] Sanderson: referred to in Padoux, *Vāc*, p. 174, n. 21.
[29] Padoux, *Vāc*, p. 174.
[30] *IPK* 1.5.11, 4.1, and 4.6: Torella, IPK, "Index of Important Words."
[31] Torella, IPK, p. xxiv, n. 32.
[32] *IPVV* (vol. 3, p. 251): Padoux, *Vāc*, . 179, n. 37.
[33] See Torella, IPK, pp. 118-9, note 23.
[34] *IPV* 1.5.13: cited and translated in Padoux, *Vāc*, pp. 175-176.

Aesthetic Astonishment

Wonder is also an essential notion in Abhinavagupta's aesthetics. It is linked to the nature of Flowing or Aesthetical Passion and may be understood as the "savouring" of the *rasa*.[1] In both the *ABh* and *DhĀL*, AG describes the nature of the experience of Flowing (*rasa*) as Transcendental Astonishment, Wonder that is "out-of-this-world" (*alaukikacamatkāra*).[2] Further, in the *DhĀL*, AG states that the experience of "the wondrous vibration of pleasure originates in aesthetical passion."[3] Finally, in the *ABh*, he defines it as "possession by enjoyment, unbroken and devoid of any dissatisfaction."[4]

The experience of wonder must always be a meaningful experience; it is the experience of making sense out of the universe and of one's place in it, of seeing one's existence as meaningful. Isayeva notes that it is best understood not as an emotion, but as revelation, like the experience of

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[1] In addition to linking it with astonishment and wonder, Torella also defines it as "savouring."

[2] The Sanskrit is: *alaukika-camatkāra rasāsvādaḥ*; this is taken from Masson and Patwardhan, *Aesthetic Rapture*, vol. II, pp. 37-38, nn. 233-234: cited in Wulff, "Religion in a New Mode," p. 678, n. 20. On *alaukika*, see also Abhinavagupta's comments on *DhĀ* 2.4 where he states that the apprehension of *rasa* transcends ordinary experiences: Ingalls. Dhvanyāloka, pp. 195-196, n. 15. Ingalls also notes that the term *alaukika* had already been used by Nyāya and Buddhist epistemologists to refer to modes of perception unexplained by ordinary, physcial causes.

[3] *DhĀL* 2.4: translated in Isayeva, *From Early Vedanta to Kashmir Shaivism*, p. 171.

[4] *ABh*: cited and translated in Padoux, *Vāc*, p. 174, n. 21.

wonder that comes from solving a word-riddle.[5] It is experienced in the mathematical world as "Aha! Insight,"[6] a flash of creative imagination/discovery, allowing one to organize various perceptions at a higher level, finding the key pattern. In other words, it is the experience of everything coming together. Applied to human existence, it is the experience of figuring out the riddle that is life.

Astonishment as Religious Experience

As the culmination of aesthetic experience, in AG's religious system it also becomes religious experience.[7] It has already been seen that Wonder is understood as transcendental and as nondual. Isayeva notes that the experience of God in fact is not the recognition of an object that is other than the subject but the experience of Flowing or the Creative Flash that streams through consciousness, filled with erotic trembling and amazement:

> [W]hat is being "recognized is never an object of love itself (since both God and the animated, cognizing subject are essentially placed beyond the grasp of knowledge) but the overwhelming ontological passion, or *rasa*. One is immediately aware of the presence of *rasa* (or

[5] Isayeva, *From Advaita Vedanta to Kashmir Shaivism*, p. 173.
[6] See Martin Gardner, *Aha! Insight* (New York: W.H. Freeman & Co., 1978).
[7] Padoux, *Vāc*, p. 179.

> *pratibhā*--the "flash" of light) owing to that specific "trembling," "shivering" (*vīp*) that overtakes both the poet and his listener, bringing forth the overtones of erotic love (*ullāsa*) and joyous amazement of recognition (*camatkāra*).[8]

God's Own Astonishment

Important for us, Astonishment is a term that AG blends into his Trika system. In particular AG links it to the Heart and its energies.[9] The Heart, in which resounds the continually emerging sound of reflexive awareness, is understood as the unity of light and this aesthetic rapture (*camatkāra*).

Further, *camatkāra*, the amazement that God experiences reflecting on its own freedom, is equated by AG with God's creative urge or impulse, its energy of will or desire (*icchāśakti*).[10]

For AG, the tantric practitioner could have a similar experience, he could also be amazed by his own creativity:

> The more this uncreated overflowing reality is seen clearly, the more wonder unfolds. The various levels in which creative intuition follows from conventional language being immersed in what precedes it, and that in the primordial, transcendental [beyond *māyā*] phonemes. Those who repose in this creative intuition, overflowing with the primordial phonemes, become poetic and linguistic adepts. Resting in this consciousness-reality in its highest form, unlimited by

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[8] Isayeva, *From Advaita Vedanta to Kashmir Shaivism*, pp. 184-185.
[9] Again, see Isayeva, *From Advaita Vedanta to Kashmir Shaivism*, p. 138; and also Dyczkowski, Stanzas, pp. 38 and 45.
[10] *TS* 1, p. 6: taccamatkāra icchāśaktiḥ: noted by Padoux, *Vāc*, p. 247.

> conventional language, what would they not [be able to] know [and] what would they not [be able to do] do?[11]

Maheśvarānanda also describes the tantric experience as one of amazement. And already in the *Aphorisms of Śiva* the yogic stages of meditation were described with the term *vismaya*, also indicating astonishment.[12] In Maheśvarānanda's understanding of the secret ritual, the *siddha* is understood as wild with joy and amazement as he discovers a new freedom. This freedom seems to have a concrete referent as it is described as the infinite field of energy of "I"-consciousness and its vitality (*mantravīrya*). The connection with vitality, and a bliss that rejoins the cosmic essence hints further at some substratum:

> Bewildered (wild with joy), stupefied (amazed), the siddha discovers the infinite field of energy, the freedom unheard-of, of the "I" and its vitality (*mantravīrya*). Parallel to this vitality, its bliss rejoins its cosmic essence, from which there is the inexpressible amazement (*camatkāra*) as a result.[13]

JR himself identifies *camatkāra* with the nectar of illumination. For JR, when the Self reposes in the Self, there arises the nectar of immortality, and this is understood as the supreme joyous amazement of the recollection

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[11] *TĀ* 11.76-79: my translation of Gnoli's translation.

[12] *ŚS* 1.12: noted by Gnoli, *LDSS*, p. 17.

[13] My translation of Silburn, Mahārthamañjarī, p. 55.

of being.[14] Thus, freely mixing the abstract with the concrete in his discussion, JR describes Consciousness while evoking a concrete substratum, the fluid of enlightenment.

Concluding Reflections: Transacting, Sacrifice, Meaning

For Abhinavagupta, *vimarśa* is a deep, complex, and potent word. The dynamism and creativity of the experience of the Godhead, experienced most fully in the tantric performance of sexual union, has naturally transferred to this pivotal term in AG's language.[15] Indeed, as we have seen, *vimarśa* means "recollecting," literally, gathering together the parts of one's self that have been dispersed out into the world of objectivity and that have caused one to forget the self's connection to Śiva-Bhairava. The parts are gathered together and brought back to God, much as the Vedic sages picked up the pieces of Prajāpati when God had exhausted himself; there too the bits had gone too far from God and thus had to be recollected and returned to God.

That God is *vimarśa* implies that sacrifice remains a viable option; at any moment the return to God is accessible. Reflexive Awareness,

[14] *TĀV*, commentary on *TĀ 3.81*: Padoux, *Vāc*, p. 257.

explicitly described by Abhinavagupta as Vitality, Primordial Resounding, Liquid Bliss, or Creative Insight is continually emitted by God and at the same time connects the seer back to God. AG uses the term "Reflexive Awareness" with respect to both the Kaula erotic union and the experience of recollecting God; he is able to do this by reinterpreting the notion of swallowing and relishing and returning the liquid bliss to the deity. Thus, the primordial sacrifice remains at the center of AG's worldview, becoming reinterpreted and overlaid with new meaning.

Whether or not the original sacrifice contained the inherent tendency to become interiorized I do not intend to answer here. However it is interesting to note that in AG's mind at least there is a connection between sacrifice and meaning. I am reminded here that many have observed that sacrifice is always meaning-ful. Frederick Turner goes one step further when he remarks that indeed sacrifice itself becomes meaning. He explains precisely what he means with the example of the Christian eucharistic sacrifice:

> The process of commutation also has much in common with the processes of metaphorization, symbolization, even reference or meaning itself. The Christian eucharistic sacrifice of bread not only *stands in* for the sacrifice of Christ (which in turn stands in for the

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[15] See above; I am purposely referring back to the beginning of this chapter.

> death of the whole human race); it also *means*, and in sacramental theology *is*, the death of Christ.[16]

This remarkable insight, not surprisingly, would be applicable to the Kaula sacrifice, as understood by AG. I adapt Turner's insight as follows:

> Eating the liquid bliss *stands in* for swallowing the Godhead: eating the Liquid Bliss of Śiva, rightly understood as a sacrifice replacing the Vedic sacrifice itself, replicates or stands in for sacrificing God, for swallowing the Godhead, making it part of oneself, and indeed swallowing or becoming the totality;
>
> Eating the liquid bliss *means* swallowing the Godhead: at the same time eating the Liquid Bliss means swallowing the Godhead which means becoming part of the lineage and streaming back towards God, gathering God together once again (that the act is meaningful is seen by the fact that it results in gnosis, i.e., in the liberating knowledge of the Godhead);
>
> Eating the liquid bliss *is* swallowing the Godhead:
> finally, in AG's theology, eating the Liquid Bliss is nothing less than becoming Bhairava.

It is important to show that AG would agree with such a formulation. In fact, AG explicitly links together the notion of sacrifice with the notion of meaning. For AG it was precisely through the Kula liturgy (*kulaprakriyā*) understood primarily as sacrifice, that the meaning and essence of Trika was found.[17]

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16 Turner, *Beauty*, p. 52.

17 See Flood, *Body and Cosmology*, pp. 269 ff.

He makes it clear that he understood the Kula liturgy as the ultimate sacrificial ritual by explicitly calling it the "primordial sacrifice."[18] Thus AG and his tradition appropriated and reinterpreted Vedic sacrificial terminology so that this Kaula sacrifice of sexual union and the offering of sexual fluids[19] is the new and ultimate sacrifice to replace all Vedic sacrifices and offerings.[20]

This was easy enough, for already in the Tantric context the central act resembled Vedic sacrifice. AG takes these similarities and extends them in his hermeneutics of Consciousness.

For example, in the Tantric context, the practitioner offered the *kuṇḍagolaka*, juices mingled together, to incite the *yoginīs*.[21] Juice is offered to get the juices flowing in a sense. In the Vedic context, Soma itself was seen as overflowing with juice. A term that is possibly in the same semantic field is found in a Vedic hymn of praise to Soma, extolling the wonders of the ecstasy of Soma, referring to the "juices of him so full of juice mingle together."[22] Already in the Vedic context, the mingling and

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[18] *TĀ* 29.164a-166a.
[19] *TĀ* 29.127b-129a: Flood, *Body and Cosmology*, p. 235.
[20] See Flood, *Body and Cosmology*, pp. 235-236, and notes. Flood notes that identifying sexual union and sacrifice goes back to at least the Upaniṣads.
[21] See Sanderson, "Purity and Power," p. 201 and p. 213, n. 97.
[22] *RV* 9.113, v. 5: translated in O'Flaherty, *Rig Veda*, p. 133.

flowing of juices becomes associated with the creative language evoked by seers in states of ecstasy and bliss. Now AG in his hermeneutics of consciousness continues to associate mingling with creative language. Thus, one of his final chapters in the *TĀ*, chapter 35, refers to the primordial revelation as the fusion (*melana*) of all revelations. It has also been seen in TĀ 3 that the Mass of Sounds is in fact the source in which the sounds mingle together. Similarly AG describes the highest state of consciousness being reached through rays of consciousness bouncing back on one another like a great hall of mirrors. Again, that he would discuss such mingling of consciousnesses in the context of the secret ritual can suggest only that he is clearly referring back to, and is clearly using as his inspiration, the mingling of male and female and in particular the mingling of male and female sexual fluids.

Mingling was related to the notions of extraction and attraction. Essential in the Kula/Kaula rite was the extraction of sexual fluid by the yoginī to be offered back to the male practitioner and to the deity. This itself as David White has shown was a reinterpretation of an earlier cremation grounds practice.[23] Similarly, essential to Vedic ritual was the

[23] White, "Transformations," pp. 196-197 on extraction and attraction.

process of extracting the essence of the Prajāpati's energy and returning it back. This was paralleled by extracting the essence of all the positive qualities of the universe into one fluid with which the king was anointed. The king was thus identified with the essence of the power of the universe. Also, in the Vedic context, there is the notion of the extraction of *soma*.[24]

AG's hermeneutics of consciousness was precisely a hermeneutics of retrieval or extraction, of which he himself was well aware. Both KR and JR continued this hermeneutical process; JR was perhaps most explicit about this link when he cites a Tantric text, replacing the elements of the Vedic sacrifice with those of the Kula sacrifice.[25]

Further, for AG this sacrifice was meaningful. In fact the whole purpose of this rite was nothing less than the transmission of gnosis, identified by AG with precisely the meaning of the Kula (*kulārtha*). Thus for AG, in the sacrifice, the highest meaning, the meaning of the kula (*kulārtha*), flows from the Godhead to the guru through the yoginī to the practitioner.[26]

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[24] A.A. MacDonell, *Vedic Mythology* (Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass, 1974), p. 105.
[25] TĀV, pp. 3368-9: translated in Silburn, *Kuṇḍalinī*, pp. 184-185.
[26] *TĀ* 29.122a-124a.

I note here that for AG sacrifice is always reflexive. The Godhead embodies itself in his own emission; and that emission is used in turn as a means to identify with the Godhead.[27]

AG thus links his own understanding of sacrifice with the Vedic understanding. Brian Smith sums up the essence of the Vedic sacrifice with the famous reflexive image of the hand turning back on itself to draw itself turning back on itself:

> The repeated statement in the Brāhmaṇas that "the sacrifice is Prajāpati" points to the productive power of the ritual ("When he (the sacrificer) offers, he emits forth this all") and indicates that Prajāpati and the ritual share the same essence. The two are counterforms of each other" "this all," which is Prajāpati, corresponds to (or results from, *anu*) the sacrifice. Prajāpati emit from himself or, as one text says, "makes his *ātman*" the sacrifice, and, as we have seen, the sacrificial operation in turn recreates a unified Prajāpati. Like Escher's "Drawing Hands," Prajāpati and the sacrifice bring each other into existence.[28]

And the Vedas themselves, in true fashion referring back to themselves, describe the essence as follows: "With the sacrifice the gods sacrificed to the sacrifice."[29] What is most important however is that AG himself viewed sacrifice as reflexive, viewed its new substitute, the Kaula sacrifice, as

[27] See here the introductory article in Steven J. Bartlett and Peter Suber, eds., *Self-Reference: Reflections on Reflexivity*, Martinus Nijhoff Philosophy Library, vol. 21 (Boston: M. Nijhoff, 1987), p. 17. They imply that this expression of reflexivity is found cross-culturally among certain rituals involving "communion" or participation in the Godhead.
[28] Smith, *Reflections*, p. 68.

reflexive, and viewed the interiorization of the sacrifice as reflexive. More than that however insofar as *vimarśa* was identified as this reflexive sacrifice, *vimarśa* became meaningful. Abhinavagupta plays with and restates the very same idea articulated in the Vedas when he says: "The Emissional Abode is the Projection by the Self, of the Self, to the Self." [30] The recollecting of the Self as described by AG points back to the Vedic rebuilding of Prajāpati. Re-collecting the Self involves envisioning the Self in a new way; more precisely, the Self recreates in an act of touching forth, so that simultaneously Self may be able to touch back, to recollect Being.

Now the essence of sacrifice for AG is to offer back to God the very same thing that flows out of God. In other words, as Muller-Ortega perceptively observes, the most important aspect of ritual is to render back

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[29] *RV* 10.90, v. 16: translated in O'Flaherty, *Rig Veda*, p. 31.
[30] *TĀ* 3.141b:
svātmanaḥ svātmani svātmakṣepo vaisargikī sthitiḥ//141//

to Śiva the Liquid Bliss that flows from all objects.[31] Abhinavagupta reveals his final secret:

> The wise one in order to worship properly should offer back into the highest abode that . . . [Liquid Bliss] (*rasa*) which flows and trickles from
> . . . [all] things.[32]

The essence of sacrifice is to return to Śiva what is already His, the Liquid Bliss that he continually emits; with that return, the practitioner himself reconnects to Śiva, in an act of primordial and embodied recollection, where Being itself is gathered together again in the temple of one's own body. AG's experience of gathering together is a rechanneling of the flow of sexual fluids, so that it now satisfies the human being's primordial urge to transact in meaning, to ultimately open oneself up to what is Other only to be penetrated by the blessed flow of grace.

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[31] Muller-Ortega, *Triadic Heart*, p. 195. See note below also.

[32] Excerpt from *TĀ* 26. 58-65: translated by Muller-Ortega, *Triadic Heart*, p. 194. Muller-Ortega translates *rasa* as "essence." I have slightly modified Muller-Ortega's excellent translation in order to underline what is relevant to this thesis.

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